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MIDDAY 28TH NOV - MIDDAY 5TH DEC



HALF PRICE SALE: giving £50 to support grassroots peacemakers now costs only £25

We are taking part in match-funding campaign *The Big Give* to raise money for our International Peacemakers' Fund (IPF). IPF supports overseas grassroots groups working to build peace, in communities affected by violent conflict. More on page 4.

Donations made via *The Big Give* between midday on **28th November to 5th December 2017** will be matched, up to a total of £2,000. There is no minimum donation—all support is appreciated, so please give as much as you can.

Donating is online only, at tinyurl.com/forbiggive

Please contact the office on 01865 250781 if you need help navigating the website.

Letting in the Light: Positive steps for peace in a turbulent world

20th-22nd April 2018, Hinsley Hall, Leeds

Featuring Kim Leadbeater from the Jo Cox Foundation

Gather together to explore ways to build peace and restore relationships in our communities.

A joint conference with the Anglican Pacifist Fellowship; Fellowship of Reconciliation; and Baptist, Methodist and United Reformed Church Peace Fellowships. All welcome.

For booking information and the latest contributor announcements, visit for.org.uk



Planning for the Future

Development Manager Oliver Robertson describes the results of a strategic planning meeting last October.

What is FoR for? What do we want to achieve? And how are we going to do it?

These are the kind of questions that any organisation should ask itself from time to time, even if it thinks it knows the answers. And having answers to this should be the outcome of any good strategic planning process, however it is carried out.

Thankfully, FoR's strategic planning meeting this October was a good one. Held in the Baptist International Mission Centre in Birmingham, FoR staff and trustees were joined on Friday night by nearby members and supporters. Over dinner and discussions, they explained what they valued about the Fellowship and their hopes for peace. The fact that we focus on reconciliation rather than just peace, the practical examples of how nonviolence has worked and the focus given to positive ways of peacemaking rather than just protesting were all highlighted.

These insights were held by the staff and trustees when they met the next day – FoR exists, after all, to support its members in doing their peace work. The meeting looked at what is happening in the world and what FoR is currently working on, then identified the gaps of things we should be working on but aren't, and decided how to close them. A significant focus was reviewing the Basis of FoR (the five statements that were drafted at the birth of our movement, outlining what FoR does and why) and becoming clearer about the direction we should move in.

For many of our most committed members, having a community around them of other FoR supporters and

'peace people' has been important in sustaining them. It helps to make real the 'fellowship' part of our name and it can be an important spur to take action for peace. So we will be looking in 2018 at ways to build up and strengthen more groups of FoR members. These may be local, but they may be of people who live apart but are connected in other ways, such as through age or shared past experiences.

Similarly, the Christian, faith-based nature of our work is key to who we are. The inspiration of Jesus Christ guides our work, and our belief that nonviolence is the way we are called to live helps sustain us in the face of a world that is often calling for something different. We want to help our members better connect with and be nourished by this inspiration, so that it can form the rock on which our action is built. For this reason, we are looking into revising and republishing some of our best-loved resources, including *The Biblical Basis of Pacifism* and our *Nonviolence Works* brochure showing the scores of cases where nonviolence has changed countries.

It feels like an exciting time to be involved with FoR. The world and its people are crying out for peace, and we are well-placed to meet that need. And now, following this strategic planning process, we are clearer about how we can meet this need and become, in the words of one participant, "a community of people who are inspired by the life and teachings of Jesus Christ to oppose war and work together to build a world order based on love".



PEACELINKS

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

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Peacelinks is free to members.

The Centrality of Active Nonviolence

FoR's conference on 'Reclaiming Gospel Nonviolence' took place on 14-16 July in St Mary's Monastery in Perth. Geraldine Bridges and Oliver Robertson give a flavour of what happened.

The true message of Christianity is nonviolence towards all humans, animals and the Earth, according to American priest, peace activist and former FOR USA Director John Dear.

John was speaking as one of two keynote presentations at the conference Reclaiming Gospel Nonviolence, held in Kinnoull, Perth on 14-16 July. He looked over the life of Jesus and the lives of the early Christians to draw inspiration for the idea that practising peace is the core duty of all Christians and people of faith. "As a society we are addicted to death", he said, from the wars that have been continually fought for the last seventy-plus years to the burning of dead and fossilised animals that have turned into coal, oil and natural gas.



John Dear



Lucas Johnson

Also addressing the forty-strong audience was Lucas Johnson, International Coordinator of the International Fellowship of Reconciliation. He highlighted examples of practical peacemaking around the world, including the Black Lives Matter campaign in the USA and the international observers physically standing with Colombian communities to protect them from attacks by paramilitaries and the army. But he also underlined dangers to peaceful approaches: "In South Sudan, [Fellowship of Reconciliation member] the Organisation for Nonviolence and Development does something remarkable in creating cooperation across communities, but how long can that last in a situation with no education, insufficient food and poor healthcare?" he asked.

The conference also heard about efforts to shift Catholic teaching from supporting 'Just War' to promoting nonviolence, and the decision in 2017 to devote the Pope's annual peace message to nonviolence as a style of politics for peace. Workshops focused on topics including taking the nonviolent gospel message to our communities and peacemaking in Palestine and Israel through Christian Peacemaker Teams. Participants, who came from such diverse groups as FoR, the Scottish Episcopal Church, Methodists, Quakers and the Conforti Institute, also considered ways of strengthening peace activism in Scotland. Upcoming peace opportunities were shared and discussions began about creating a Scottish branch of Pax Christi, the Catholic peace group.

"Change happens when good people break bad laws and face the consequences", said John Dear. This can be seen in the life of Jesus, who John described as "a one-man crime wave" for actions such as overturning the tables in the temple and healing the sick on the Sabbath. He urged participants to be witnesses for peace in their communities, through their actions and their lives, adding: "We are called to be faithful, not to be successful".

Accompanying for Peace

Padmakumara, clerk to the International Peacemakers' Fund, writes about the work of FoR Peace Presence in Colombia which has been helped by your donations to our International Peacemakers' Fund (IPF)

Imagine feeling threatened. Your way of life, your home, your friends, your families, targeted by violent militia and guerrilla forces, or the strong arm of economic players eager to exploit for themselves what is yours and may have been so for generations of your forebears. Imagine also, reaching out toward you, from overseas, a hand, a human being, offering themselves as a companion in witness to your injustice, a companion prepared to stand with you in defiance of your tormentors. Their witness brings with it protection, and the reality and feeling of threat diminishes. For many communities and individuals in Colombia this is no imaginary exercise, it is all too real. FoR Peace Presence, our IFOR partner branch in Colombia, have been that helping hand, that friend, for 15 years of International Accompaniment.

FoR's International Peacemakers' Fund has been giving grants to grassroots peacemakers for 12 years. Funded by members, sympathetic individuals and Trusts, we've made a difference, across the globe, where violent



Accompanying a villager to get water



Marching peacefully between threatened communities



Protest at Government offices www.forpeacepresence.org

conflict is a reality. When FoR Peace Presence applied for funding for 2017 we read of their inspirational successes helping those such as the Peace Community of San José de Apartadó, Astrocampo (Association of Land Workers), and Tierra Digna. We all felt a strong desire to support their Accompaniment programme at a time when a major donor was no longer able to help.

The dawn of hope offered by 2016's peace agreement between the Colombian government and the FARC, the main rebel group that has been fighting for 50 years, might convince observers from overseas that such accompaniment is of less value. The opposite is the case; the number of people under threat has risen significantly, partly because the two major combatant forces are not so active. Smaller factions and even civil authorities have increased their threats to ways of life and those seeking to defend them. With your help FoR Peace Presence have been able to maintain their commitments and extend these to include newly threatened groups. As I type this article they are about to embark upon accompanying in the Chocó region of Colombia with the Inter-Church Commission for Justice and Peace. These partners are helping to establish a new humanitarian space, free of armed actors, in a rural part of the country.

FoR Peace Presence have also just held an evaluation/training week for new candidates to be an accompanier.

After a record number of applications, six finalists met and, of those, four were selected for the coming year. The first of those, Elliot Wheeler from Texas, has already joined the team. Finally, Peter Cousins, FoR Peace Presence's Executive Director recently got in touch to say that "our accompanied partners in Buenaventura, the Humanitarian Space of Puente Nayero, have been awarded the FOR-USA Pfeffer International Peace Prize. So impressed were we by their work that we nominated them and are delighted that they have been awarded this recognition."

For those interested to know more of the International Accompaniment work, former human rights observer Janey Skinner gives an interview to the FoR Peace Presence Team, available to listen to online at: <http://tinyurl.com/forpp-podcast>

To support projects like this and have your donation doubled, please visit tinyurl.com/forbiggive between midday on 28th November to 5th December. There's more about the IPF projects at for.org.uk/ipf

People Power: Fighting For Peace

During the summer, the Imperial War Museum in London held an exhibition on 100 years of peace campaigning. Now much campaigning has been done by a lot of people in that time, so before the visit, I had wondered how comprehensive it could be. I was hoping to find mention of FoR and, as a bonus, perhaps something local to where I live.

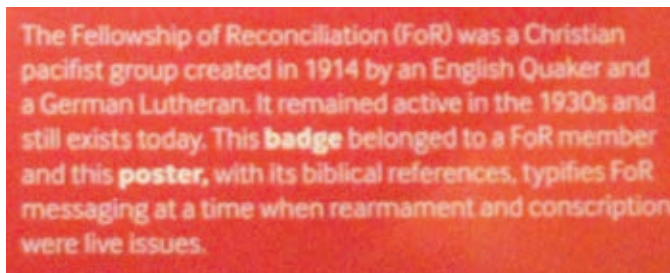
The exhibition was located on the third floor, above the military hardware that haunts the entrance hall.

One of the main purposes was to "explore how peace activists have used the creative against the destructive". So there were posters, banners, badges, photographs, letters, audio and video, and other memorabilia.

The section on the First World War was mainly about conscientious objectors, how they were dealt with, and what opportunities they were given, such as serving in medical facilities. You could listen to stories of individuals such as Bert Brocklesby, a Methodist preacher and FoR member, who at one point was under threat of execution for his beliefs, after already having been imprisoned in Richmond Castle.

FoR gets a brief mention as having been founded in 1914 and there was a poster attributed to us from that period (see right and below).

This was encouraging but I saw nothing more about us for the next 95 years. At least they said we still exist today.



The Fellowship of Reconciliation (FoR) was a Christian pacifist group created in 1914 by an English Quaker and a German Lutheran. It remained active in the 1930s and still exists today. This badge belonged to a FoR member and this poster, with its biblical references, typifies FoR messaging at a time when rearmament and conscription were live issues.

Between the world wars there was growing public support against war, and the exhibition included some archive photographs and film from the period of people on peace marches.

The Cold War period was the biggest part of the exhibition. There were good features on the Committee

of 100 and nonviolent civil disobedience, and also about the growth of CND and the design by Gerald Holtom of their symbol that is known worldwide. You could watch a government film about 'Protect and Survive' and find out about the 'Protest and Survive' reaction. Pete Kennard's photo-montage posters stand out from that time. There was video from the Women's Peace Camp at USAF Greenham Common, where land-based nuclear missiles and warheads were based. You could even write a message to put on a piece of original fence.

I was pleasantly surprised to find an exhibit that linked my present home city. One of the women protesters, Debbie Handy, had a small accordion on display that she had played at numerous peace events. And there was a photograph of her at a vigil at Northampton, holding the Peterborough Women Against Nuclear Weapons banner that still exists today.

Posters from the modern era, included David Gentleman's designs for Stop The War Coalition. His blood red splodge was highly evocative of the horror of war. There were video interviews with him, Lindsey German, Kate Hudson, Vanessa Redgrave, Mark Rylance, and others. And it was encouraging to see images of both Brian Haw's solitary anti-war protest in Parliament Square, there for many years from 2001, and the biggest ever peace march held in the run up to the Iraq War in 2003.

After all the campaigns and protests during a century of war, this exhibition was a welcome reminder of the impact our actions can have upon those around us, and occasionally on those who wield political power.

Dave Pybus



Events Round up

News in brief from Emma Anthony, Membership and Outreach Officer

Church House arms sponsorship

The ongoing scandal of the Church of England's central London conference centre, Church House Westminster, hosting events sponsored by arms dealers continued for another year. In a change of tactics, FoR members phoned Church House and sent them messages online through twitter, to show Church House the breadth of concern. In 2018, we plan to campaign on this issue throughout the year, rather than focussing on when the conferences are happening, and to highlight the inconsistency between the CofE's ethical investment policy (which largely bans arms company investments) and the practices at Church House.

DSEi

FoR was at the protests that preceded the biennial Defence and Security Equipment International (DSEi) arms fair in London. We organised a Taizé service as part of the 'No Faith In War' day of religious protests on 5th September, which saw 200 protesters from various faiths gathering to worship together. Some activists lay in the road and others abseiled from a nearby road bridge to obstruct trucks delivering military equipment to the exhibition. Setup was apparently four days behind schedule, with staff working round the clock to make the venue ready for the arms dealers.

Remembrance

For a third year, FoR distributed white poppies, an alternative symbol at Remembrance that recognises all deaths in war and commits to working to prevent future war. We sent them to seven churches and one church visitor centre, up from three last year. FoR members were involved in Remembrance vigils around the country, and people shared the prayer for Remembrance from our website.

Nationally, white poppies had a higher profile than ever this year, with coverage in religious and national press, and on TV. The reception was often hostile, but FoR believes it is a good thing that people are offered an alternative to militaristic narratives of Remembrance.

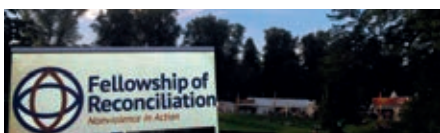


Greenbelt

FoR again had a stall at Greenbelt, the festival of arts, faith, and justice. The ten FoR volunteers who staffed the stall asked festival-goers about their experiences of raising peace issues in their church and set up a scorechart of what they talk about in church. Of the six options, peace came in joint fourth with 'the coffee rota' and behind 'the organ', 'the Bible' and 'relationships', but ahead of 'sustainability'.



In the wider festival, there was a session from Black Lives Matter; a talk about war and its roots in toxic masculinity (the notion that men ought to display certain attributes, most of which are patriarchal and harmful); and a discussion loosely based around experiences of nonviolent action.



Peace Sunday

Emma Anthony introduces the experiences that two FoR members had of this year's Peace Sunday

Peace Sunday this year was bigger than ever, with over 20 services and collections taking place across the country, coverage in the religious media and local radio, and over £600 raised for FoR and its International Peacemakers' Fund (see page 4).

A big THANK YOU to everyone who took part – using the prayers, reading a reflection or stories from overseas peacemakers, or holding a cake sale. Please let us know how we can improve the resource for next year. Peace Sunday 2018: 23 September.

Kathy Pitt describes how two services, in Hebden Bridge and Todmorden, Yorkshire, came about:

Encouraged by the enthusiasm of fellow peacemakers at FoR's joint conference in Manchester, I returned home keen to raise the peace profile in my local Methodist Church. A chance conversation with another of our congregation led to Peacemaking Sunday being added as an "Own Arrangement" service in the forthcoming Circuit Plan. We pulled together the most accessible readings and reflections from the last three years of Peace Sunday resources, and chose hymns the congregation knew already.

These ideas were slotted into the "Sunday service template", and all of a sudden, it began to seem like a real service with all the familiar structure! From the start we also decided to use a variety of media to appeal to people's different tastes and learning styles.

We chose suitable hymns and constructed a Powerpoint presentation consisting of famous quotations, with images, about peace, and set the whole thing to music. The FoR office sent us leaflets about its work and we were granted permission to hold a retiring collection for the International Peacemakers' Fund. I also obtained posters which we displayed on our big outside church noticeboard as well as the smaller indoor one, to publicise the service.

We adapted the Two Mules fable for the children's Sunday School session and obtained posters (but no donkeys!) from Quaker headquarters before the Sunday School children acted it out.

We revised the contents of the template and timed every element. Amazingly, it added up to one hour (almost!) exactly. We held the service at our local

church on Peace Sunday and then repeated the whole thing at another local Methodist church the following Sunday.

We aimed to involve the congregation, make them think, reflect, pray and hopefully act on what they experienced and I think we succeeded at least to some extent. After one of the services, a lady came up to me and told me about her late father who had been a Minister and conscientious objector during the Second World War and at odds with his congregation who considered him a traitor. People took leaflets and many contributed to the IPF. As for next year... we're already pencilled in!

Wico van Mourik organised a Peace Mass at St Osmund's Catholic Church in Gainford, County Durham. The children's group were involved, making a "peace mobile" and the church is thinking about its how to continue its witness for peace beyond Peace Sunday. Wico reports that during the prayers "there was a reverence and intensity that I had not experienced for some time in the congregation". Some prayers were from FoR's Peace Sunday resource, and another he has shared:

Lord we pray, that we may see justice and peace as our own and our church's mission and that we may pray for world peace every day and support peace movements in any way we can.

Lord, hear our prayer.

Lord, we pray, that before that, we may recognise strife, conflict and violence in our own communities and parishes and reach out peacefully towards those who we are at odds with.

Lord, hear our prayer.

Lord we pray, that even before that, we realise how in our relationships we are inclined towards hurt and selfishness and that we, from now on, should strive for peace in our families.

Lord, hear our prayer.

Lord we pray, that before and above all, we make peace with ourselves by being at peace in you; only then can we offer others the gift of true peace.

Lord hear our prayer.

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.

cymdeithascymod.org.uk Cymdeithas y Cymod (FoR Wales)

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

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

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

anglicanpeacemaker.org.uk Anglican Pacifist Fellowship.

ncpo.org.uk Network of Christian Peace Organisations.

Every Tuesday: Witness and protest at NSA Menwith Hill, by the A59 near Harrogate, 6 - 8pm. <https://www.caab.org.uk/>

November 28: Meet the Minister for Peace, Tea House Theatre in Vauxhall, London, 7 pm. Conscience will be in dialogue with Fabian Hamilton MP, the current shadow minister of Peace and Disarmament. Help us brainstorm. Booking: tel 020 3515 9132, <http://bit.ly/2z0yUjn>

November 29 & Every Wednesday: Vigil at Faslane Trident base, 4pm Contact tp2000@gn.apc.org

December 1: Prisoners for Peace Day, worldwide www.wri-irg.org/

December 10: Human Rights Day.

December 10: Nobel Peace Prize award ceremony, Oslo. This year the award is to the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons [ICANW] <http://www.icanw.org/> FoR is one of the partner organisations.

January 13: Weaving our Own Web: Using the internet to strengthen our groups and to campaign more effectively. This is a Peace News Dayschool, London, tel 020 7278 3344, <http://www.peacenews.info>

February 14: Ash Wednesday: annual witness at MoD .

March 18: Corrymeela Sunday www.corrymeela.org

March 18 - 25: Fly Kites Not Drones Week - resources available from: <https://dronecampaignnetwork.wordpress.com>

April 20 - 22: FoR Conference and Annual Council, Leeds. see page 1.

May 15: International Conscientious Objectors' Day

May 24: International Women's Day for Disarmament - more details at <https://www.womenpeacemakersprogram.org/>

June 4: International Day for Children as victims of war - more details at <https://www.unicef.org/gmfc/>

September 23: Peace Sunday www.for.org.uk/peacesunday



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[] information about the International Peacemakers Fund

[] to receive a standing order form so I can give
regularly to support the Fellowship

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