



Unitarian Peace Fellowship Newsletter

*For all within our denomination who witness to the
belief that war and preparation for war are
failures of humanity*

Issue 8, May 2014

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Words from the Chair

To begin, I want to express my thanks to Joyce for her leadership of our Fellowship this past year. Her devotion and passion for making peace and connecting to others is an example I hope I am able to follow.

Traditionally this portion of the newsletter is to mention and highlight our Annual Appeal. We chose **Warchild** because of their commitment to working with communities in war torn areas of our world. Their work not only benefits the children in these areas but the whole community. So I hope we will all give generously to help.

This year, for me, is one of transitions. In my personal life with the end of studies, accepting a call to minister, looking to celebration and commitment with my partner. I am in transition. A major point of this transition is my agreeing to become Chair of the UPF. I look forward to working directly on ideas and development of actions with each or you and for our beloved community. As I write this we are developing our programme for the gathering this October, looking to be both inspiring and active. I am in conversation with others on the committee about how we can raise our "profile" what we can do to create interest in and enthusiasm for UPF. Hopefully to continue our trend of growth. I equally want to explore ways we can link with other organisations, both within and out of the Unitarian fold, to further our vision and mission of peace. Besides the Society of Friends, who else can we link with in our work for peace?

I do hope you can join us for the Gathering, but also in the activities we have planned for this year, and remember we value suggestions, for organisations that we can highlight through our appeals, to things we can do as a fellowship and groups we can work alongside for peace and reconciliation.

Blessings for this renewing time of year.

John Philip Carter

Peace Fellowship Matters

Subscriptions for the next year:

Thanks to those of you who have paid your subscription for 2014/15. To those of you who haven't, this year's subs are as follows:

Individual:	£8.00
Small Group	£17.00
Large Group:	£25.00

Our 2014 Appeal, was launched at the General Assembly meetings in April, and is in aid of **Warchild**. This is a UK-based charity which aims to support children affected by war. Their aim isn't to provide 'some kind of support' to as many children as possible. It is to provide sustainable, intensive support to the most marginalised and vulnerable children and young people; and to strengthen the capacity of the families, communities and authorities to look after their own children. Their projects are all rooted in their local communities and they involve and employ local people - teaching them new skills and supporting their local economy. Please give generously. Warchild's website address is www.warchild.org.uk.

We would be very grateful if you would send your cheques, made payable to 'The Unitarian Peace Fellowship', to our Treasurer, Mike Tomlin. (address on back page). Please write on the back of the cheque what the payment is for (i.e. subs / appeal / both). Thank you very much.

DATE FOR YOUR 2014 DIARY: Unitarian Peace Fellowship Gathering on the theme *What Can We Do For Peace?* will be taking place on 10-12th October 2014 at the Nightingale Centre, Great Hucklow - see page 11 for details.

The Quaker Peace Testimony

Following a very short AGM, attenders of the Unitarian Peace Fellowship slot at the General Assembly meetings heard Northampton Quaker Rosemary Sturge speaking about the Quaker Peace Testimony down the ages. Here is an adaptation of Gwyneth Roper's report, which first appeared in the next morning's *GAZette* (reprinted with permission).

Simplicity, Truth, Equality, and Peace are the original testimonies that the Quakers chose to live by, with Sustainability being a fairly new one added recently. The Peace Testimony was the earliest written testimony, as it was needed in the 1600s to demonstrate to the government of the day that Quaker aims were peaceful.

Although the movement did become more introverted, they still interacted with the outside world, mainly as Quakers were seen as good businessmen because of their Truthfulness, and were seen as fair.

We flit into the 1800s and Quakers campaigned vigorously against slavery. Rosemary's husband's forebear, Joseph Sturge, was a renowned businessman who bought an island in the West Indies, released the slaves and then paid them a living wage in the lime-growing business of the island; a good demonstration of how, when fairly treated, productivity and living standards can change for the better.

Friends of War Victims was set up in the Crimean War to help Quakers imprisoned as conscientious objectors, and this continued in the Great War, where this group helped to give those objectors roles on the battlefield, in the ambulance service, giving assistance to any victim irrespective of nationality, getting injured men from both sides back to aid stations. Some conscientious objectors were found work on the land in protected jobs to ensure

they were not sent into battle. Similar work continued in the Second World War.

In 1947 Quakers were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for relief work done. Moving forward to more modern times, objections to nuclear weapons and ecumenical accompaniers in Palestine to supporting people through checkpoints to places of work, these are just a couple of projects through the peace work of the Quakers.

Not much on World War I, you may think, but this eloquent speaker had me captivated with her potted history of peace. Thank you for sending me into the meetings with thoughts of how do we make a difference?

Gwyneth Roper

Words to Ponder

“Avoiding conflict isn’t peacemaking. Avoiding conflict means running away from the mess while peacemaking means running into the middle of it.

Peacemaking means addressing those issues that caused conflict in the first place.

Peacemaking can never be separated from doing justice. They go hand in hand. Peacemaking means having to stir the waters on the way to peace.

Peacemaking means speaking the truth in love, but speaking the truth nonetheless.”

~ Peggy Haymes from *Strugglers, Stragglers and Seekers*

The Global Peace Index: is the world becoming more or less peaceful?

Peace is one of the most profoundly used words in the human language, but how much do we know about peace?

By developing the Global Peace Index, creating a ranking of the nations of the world according to their peacefulness, The Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP) can help us start to look at a deeper detail about the attitudes, institutions, and structures which create a peaceful society. Without peace, we can't actually build the building blocks to create a modern society as we know it today.

The IEP is an independent, non-partisan, non-profit research organisation dedicated to shifting the world’s focus to peace as a positive, achievable, and tangible measure of human well-being and progress.

The IEP achieves its goals by developing new conceptual frameworks to define peacefulness; providing metrics for measuring peace; and uncovering the relationships between business, peace and prosperity as well as promoting a better understanding of the cultural, economic and political factors that create peace.

The IEP has offices in Sydney and New York. It works with a wide range of partners internationally and collaborates with intergovernmental organisations on measuring and communicating the economic value of peace.

The founder of IEP, Steve Killelea says:

‘One of the most important notions for us is that peace isn't some kind of nebulous concept. It's quantifiable, it's measurable, and it's trackable.

If we wanted to understand the properties of light, would we study darkness? If you wanted to live a really healthy life, would you hang around people who are on their deathbed? To understand what's going to create lasting peace, we're not going to learn from trying to study conflict.

The Global Peace Index is the world's leading measure of peacefulness. The index gauges the level of safety and security in a society, the extent of domestic or international conflict, and the degree of militarization. The most peaceful country in the world is Iceland, followed by Denmark and New Zealand. Peace. In many ways, it's not an abstract concept. It relates directly to me and you and the quality with which we live our lives. In the past, peace may have been the domain of the altruistic, but today it's in everyone's self-interest.

We are in an epoch different to any other epoch in human history. The problems we are facing are global in nature. They include climate change, ever decreasing biodiversity, full use of the fresh water on the planet and underpinning all these – overpopulation. Without peace we will be unable to achieve the levels of cooperation, inclusiveness and social equity required to begin solving these challenges, let alone empower the international institutions needed to regulate them.

Vision of Humanity is a strong proponent of the need to further study, advocate and act on peace. It groups together a number of interrelated initiatives focused on global peace which enjoy the support of a wide range of philanthropists, business people, politicians, religious leaders and intellectuals. It brings a strategic approach to raising the world's attention and awareness around the importance of peace to humanity's survival in the 21st century'.

The 2013 Global Peace Index report

Published on 11th June 2013, this report analyses the state of peace around the world, identifying trends in violence and conflict, as well as the key drivers of peace.

The 2013 Global Peace Index (GPI) showed:

- The world has become 5% less peaceful since 2008
- Europe is the most peaceful region, with 13 of the top 20 most peaceful countries
- War ravaged Afghanistan returns to the bottom of the index
- Syria's GPI score has fallen by 70% since 2008

The total economic impact of containing violence is estimated to be US\$9.46 trillion in 2012.

The top three most peaceful countries are Iceland, Denmark and New Zealand. The three least peaceful countries are Afghanistan, Somalia and Syria.

Since the 2008, 110 countries have become less peaceful, while 48 have improved their score.

The total economic impact of containing violence is equivalent to 11% of global GDP, or US \$9.46 trillion. If the world could reduce the cost of violence by 50% it would generate enough money to repay the debt of the developing world, provide enough money for the European stability mechanism, and fund the additional amount required to fund the Millennium Development Goals.

The table below is an extract from the 2013 Global Peace Index:

TOP 5 COUNTRIES		BOTTOM 5 COUNTRIES		RANKING OF OTHER COUNTRIES	
Rank	Country	Rank	Country	Rank	Country
1	Iceland	158	Sudan	16	Australia
2	Denmark	159	Iraq	44	United Kingdom
3	New Zealand	160	Syria	53	France
4	Austria	161	Somalia	99	USA
5	Switzerland	162	Afghanistan	111	Ukraine

Taken from: http://www.visionofhumanity.org/pdf/gpi/2013_Global_Peace_Index_Report.pdf

The 2014 Global Peace Index will be released on **18th June** with launch events in London, Washington D.C., Brussels, Berlin, Geneva, The Hague and New York City.

Daniel Hyslop, Research Manager for the Institute for Economics and Peace, says he is excited about this year's Global Peace Index findings, and that we can expect to see some startling results.

For more information, and an full version of the 2013 GPI report, check out their web site **www.economicsandpeace.org**

Christina Smith

What can we do for Peace in our congregations?

At various times we often wonder what are the ways we can highlight important issues for our congregations. I know there is no definitive statement as to what one can do, and it is as open as our creative imaginations will allow.

Here some of my thoughts to get your imaginations going.

- 1) Observe the Unitarian Peace Sunday. It is set for the third Sunday of October, the 19th this year, so there is plenty of time to prepare. If you can't do that date, then maybe the week following. Because the weekend before the 19th you will obviously be with us on the UPF Gathering at Great Hucklow, so you really are unable to do something that Sunday.
- 2) Or you can observe the United Nations Day for Peace, on 21st September, a Sunday this year. Many religious organisations have made this day a day of prayer for peace. (Be radical observe both).

- 3) Have a candle that is intentionally set aside as a peace candle for use in worship.
- 4) If you have a time for candles of joys and concerns, make one Sunday an emphasis upon peace and peacemaking concerns and celebrations.
- 5) Or maybe you want to start slowly, and have candle of joys and concerns, maybe light a candle and name a peace situation that is a concern or a joy of yours during your congregation's worship.
- 6) Start a peace fellowship and / or study group in your meeting/congregation.
- 7) Do social events with other peace people, it is important that we build the bonds of friendship, and doing fun activities are as important as our marches and discussions.
- 8) Highlight the UPF Appeal and have a special collection for it in your congregation.
- 9) Combine a peace theme with other special events or programmes. Such as Cafe Church with a theme of peacemaking, or a Christmas carol hymn sing of peace songs, or a Lenten study on Peace Spirituality.
- 10) Finally, you could suggest that your congregation join the UPF.

There are many ways and days to highlight those ideals that are important to you. May we all find ways to advance the ways of peace within our worshipping communities.

John Philip Carter

Unitarian Peace Fellowship

Annual Gathering 10th-12th October 2014 At the Nightingale Centre

Theme: *What Can We Do For Peace?*

Join us for an inspirational and uplifting weekend of workshops and fellowship - because in the words of Martin Luther King Junior:

"The hope of a secure and liveable world lies with disciplined nonconformists who are dedicated to justice, peace and brotherhood."

The weekend begins on Friday with a buffet supper, and ends on Sunday with lunch after attending the Sunday service at Great Hucklow Unitarian Chapel.

**To book contact Sue Woolley on
01604 870746 or
email: sue.woolley@virgin.net**



Unitarian Peace Fellowship Vision



The Unitarian Peace Fellowship was founded in 1916 in the darkest days of the First World War to witness for peace and against the futility of war. Today we maintain that witness. Our vision includes the ethos and values of the Charter for Compassion. The surest route to peace is through the compassion of human beings for each other and for all living things. We support and encourage Unitarians in their witness for Peace and Compassion locally, nationally, and internationally.

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