

# THE Anglican PEACEMAKER

The newsletter of the Anglican Pacifist Fellowship

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In this issue, we focus on the forgotten war in Sudan. We look ahead to the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Week of Prayer for World Peace in October and report on resistance to the return of nuclear weapons to UK soil.

## SUDAN: A FORGOTTEN WAR OF 2024



Refugees from Darfur, 2023

In April, the Anglican Archbishop of Sudan, Archbishop Ezekiel said:

*“There has been fighting for one year now, and it is still going on. People are still dying. And people are still fleeing Sudan because in many places there is no security. The sad thing is that those who ran to other countries, in many ways are also suffering. Our country is not safe, but where we run for safety is no safer. As the suffering continues, I have been thinking is it not better for somebody just to die.”*

For those remaining displaced within Sudan, the situation has reached the stage that the UN is loudly reporting Sudan is on the brink of famine with malnutrition and starvation evident. In April, Bishop Anthony Poggo, the Secretary General of the Anglican Communion, joined with a number of faith-based and charitable organisations in a statement about the humanitarian crisis in Sudan. Among their comments were,

*“serious disease outbreaks, including cholera, are compounding the impact on the population, two-thirds of whom lack access to healthcare. In all, some 24.8 million people – almost one half of Sudan’s total population of 51 million – are in need of humanitarian assistance.”*

In this overwhelming crisis, the facilitation of cross-border operations from Chad and South Sudan is critically and urgently needed. Given the radically reduced production of Sudan’s main staple cereals of sorghum and millet the humanitarian crisis, especially in Darfur, is otherwise only likely to get worse.

Other reports state that the largest number of displaced children in the world is in Sudan, with over 3.5 million (UNICEF). Also, another million children have fled to adjoining countries.

In the west, in the south and in the east, People’s Armies have taken up arms and are holding territory thus widening and further complicating any efforts towards peace.

### FROM SUE CLAYDON, CHAIR OF APF.

In 2024 while a few major conflicts – Gaza and Ukraine – have dominated the news (and in many ways quite rightly) it seems the world cannot cope with hearing about the reality of wars elsewhere. There are plenty of them including Yemen, the Sahel, Armenia–Azerbaijan, Haiti, Ethiopia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Myanmar and more.

The one we want to report on is Sudan. The conflict started here in April 2023. It is above all a conflict about power between two military forces that are each backed by other countries, so the implications are even wider than on first hearing. The Sudan Army and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), a militia recognised by the previous Government, have been fighting and while the first fighting centred on the capital, Khartoum, it has spread to many areas, including Darfur.



Archbishop Ezekiel

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Drone footage taken over Khartoum shows the streets empty with no vehicles or people moving about and building damage everywhere.

In Darfur, in the west of Sudan, the extreme violence by the RSF has made determining a death toll impossible. There are credible reports that over the first three months of the war up to 15,000 of the ethnically African Masalit people were slaughtered in the single city of El Geneina. More than half a million refugees from West Darfur have fled to Chad since April 2023. The word ‘genocide’ is being applied here.

The disputed area of Abyei (the status of this area was not agreed when South Sudan became independent in 2011 and a referendum the AU promised to hold in 2013 was not held; a self-organised referendum by the Ngok Dinka residents has not been recognised), has been in a heightened state of conflict since February 2022. Regular attacks from Misseriya militias in the north were already taking place, but recently Twic militia has also been targeting Ngok communities. This is an oil rich area. The presence of UNISFA (UN peacekeepers) has assured humanitarian aid in some parts of the area, but they have often failed to protect civilians, despite being authorised to use force to do so.

In Agok, Anglican Bishop Michael Bol Deng has said:

*“The message of the church is always peace not war. We don’t blame the whole Twic community for what is happening. We preach against recriminations. Our people need to be prepared to forgive and live in peace with neighbours when peace comes.”*

Bishop Michael has remained in Agok where the church compound shelters people at night, and many flee to the Cathedral when they hear shooting..

On 29 May, it was reported that the Sudan Army rejected a call to return to peace talks with the RSF in Jeddah.

The words that we have been hearing about the needs of Gaza are equally applied to Sudan.

*“What we urgently need from the international community is major funding, political and diplomatic measures to halt the fighting, and action to ensure safe access for humanitarian workers and aid.” Farooq Khan – Concern Country Director in Sudan,*

While what we can do as individuals is limited, it is important that we know what is happening in the ‘Forgotten Wars’ of 2024 and to keep them on our governments’ agendas. Our prayers are requested for all the Sudanese people.

*Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer: Lord, we pray for Your peace to be granted to the people of Sudan. May Your presence be felt among them, guiding them away from conflict and towards reconciliation. Lord, we pray You continue to touch the hearts of the warring leaders in Sudan. May their hearts be softened. Amen*

(With thanks to John Poole and Tim Flatman of the Church Association for Sudan and South Sudan for images and parts of this report from their recent visits to Sudan and Abyei. If you would like Tim’s full report, email him on [tflatman@gmail.com](mailto:tflatman@gmail.com) and John is willing to take questions on [johnpoole5@gmail.com](mailto:johnpoole5@gmail.com)).

## REPORT FROM BUJUMBURA, BURUNDI ON THEIR DIOCESAN YOUTH PEACE-BUILDING INITIATIVE

FROM A REPORT BY REV JEAN MARIE NZAMBIMANA, DIOCESAN YOUTH DEPARTMENT COORDINATOR, BUJUMBURA

In 2022, APF began fundraising for a reconciliation initiative organised by the Diocese of Bujumbura, Burundi. Elections in Burundi are often marred by outbreaks of violence, as rival political parties exploit young people into joining factional gangs. Bishop Eraste Bigirimana sent us a report.

The Department of Youth at the Anglican Church, Diocese of Bujumbura implemented three initiatives for youth peace education.



Parish Football Team

### INTER-PARISH FOOTBALL MATCH

The Youth Department organised a football match between two parishes: Saint Mark of Ngagara and the Christ King of Kinindo. Over 200 young people participated altogether. Afterwards, the

young people heard a speech promoting peace and justice. There was a party, and a trophy was presented to the winner.

### TRAINING YOUTH FROM POLITICAL PARTIES

Young people from different political parties attended

training at the Anglican Church Community Centre, Bujumbura Diocese. Experts in conflict management including the Vice President of Truth and Reconciliation in Burundi, led the sessions. They introduced themes such as tolerance, inclusive political processes, and democratic conflict prevention. The young people discussed how to live peacefully despite political differences. Afterwards, all the participants agreed to train other young people in their political parties.

### TRAINING YOUTH LEADERS FROM 24 PARISHES.

Normally each parish has a Youth President and a Deputy Vice President. They were invited to the peacebuilding training, enabling them to train others in their respective parishes.

### RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PARTICIPANTS AND DIOCESE

Following this training, the young participants recommended that future sessions be offered to enable more young people to benefit. Burundi elections are approaching, so peacebuilding training is particularly urgent. For this to happen, further funding is needed.

# POETRY OF PEACE

## WRONG DIRECTIONS

FROM NIGEL SPEIGHT

The Army has sent us their Recruitment  
Leaflet.

Our combined age is 164.

They want our neighbours too.

One lady has a club foot; another  
dementia.

This chap hears voices – at least he'll  
need

less training; fighting over,  
survivors often hear those too.

Not Dad's Army, then, but Grandad's.  
Is there a new SAS?

The Seniors Assassin Squad.

Who Wheelchairs Wins.

I expect we shall be kitted out with  
a new moral compass.

And an anti-tank Zimmer AK47.

There are promises as well:

*"Alongside the many benefits and  
qualifications you can earn while in the  
Army, you will end up with more money  
in your pocket..."*

Unless your trousers get exploded with  
your feet of course.

Pesky landmines.

Do check the Terms and Conditions,  
especially underfoot.

*"Utility Bills: FREE. Pension: FREE.  
Healthcare: FREE.*

*Travel: FREE"* – maybe to Heaven!

Or to Hell and back. Or not.

Hearse and Burial: FREE

(at the expense of your Pension).

The final promise is "FIND WHERE  
YOU BELONG!"

Clever. Appealing to lost souls.

They make good soldiers, don't they?

But where does the Army belong?

This leaflet – and the antennae  
buzzing at our address – belong in the  
bin.

*"We have over 200 roles in the British  
Army."*

So try introducing your Marketing  
Division  
to Intelligence.

## SHOT FOR COWARDICE

BY CHRISTOPHER IDLE, APF MEMBER

*Private JB in WWI; a village near Cambrai  
in Northern France (which I hitch-hiked  
through in 1954.) His son, born  
1914 speaks:*

They shot my Dad for cowardice  
in nineteen seventeen,  
when I was just a 3-year-old;

the Dad I'd hardly seen.

I never knew what happened till  
much later, many years;  
just had this childhood memory  
of Mum awash with tears.

Sometimes she screamed and shouted,  
and

I thought she would explode;  
but then she sat for hours and hours  
just looking down the road,

as if she half-expected Dad

to walk in at the gate,  
and say 'It's over, love; I'm back,  
for good; just rather late!'

When I grew up, I poked around  
and found a whole lot more;  
Dad ran away, AWOL it seemed  
with more than one encore.

'Deserted' was the word they used,  
the documents are clear;  
these yellowing papers tell the facts;  
I've got them with me here.

They bullied and they beat him and  
they tried to teach him sense;  
they chained him to a wheel all day,  
and tied him to a fence.

While they just went on killing;  
Who knows how many died?  
So one more death, what's that to them?  
But he was on their side!

And he had once signed up to join;  
he was a volunteer;  
it was an anniversary;  
been married just a year.

His final trial was very short;  
he had nothing to say,  
no evidence, no self-defence;  
soon he was led away.

They let him send one letter, so  
he scribbled down a note  
which said to Mum 'I love you'; that's  
the last he ever wrote.

The chaplain came to pray with him,  
and sat with him all night;  
until the marksmen reached his door  
as it was getting light.

They tied his hands and bound his eyes,  
a white patch on his heart;  
eleven mates with guns lined up,  
and each one played his part.

Five paces was the space between  
the shooters and the shot.  
They kept the rules, they did their job;  
one death was what they got.

As if he was the murderer,  
no funeral hymn, no choir;  
the last word he would hear on earth



Wounded British Soldiers, Bernafay Wood 1916

was someone shouting 'Fire!'

His crumpled body slithered down;  
they shoved it in the ground:  
then marched back to their toast and tea,  
without another sound.

In three more weeks came Christmas,  
when

they all sang 'Silent Night'  
in English and in German;  
which is only good and right.

The strangest thing of all came out  
long after I had died;  
2006, the Government  
agreed they would decide

to issue lots of pardons  
for soldiers like my Dad  
who didn't do as they were told;  
the men who turned out bad.

I find this very odd, because,  
you see, it seems to me  
it wasn't Dad who needed pardon,  
but the powers that be.

How dare they shoot my Dad, when he  
had done the decent thing?

The ones who needed pardon were  
the Generals, and the King!

But who will dish out pardons now?  
So far as I can see  
the only ones who can forgive  
are God, and Mum, and me.

I'm not sure I'm quite ready yet  
to give my pardons out;  
so please forgive me, if my faith  
comes with a dash of doubt.

My Dad was not a hero;  
I never said he was:  
but nor was he a coward.  
I'm claiming that, because

he seems to me a lovely bloke  
just like his mates – before;  
but unlike them, votes with his feet  
to say his 'No' to war.

*The basic storyline here is absolutely true,  
but the responses of JB's wife and son are  
as imagined by me. It also seemed best  
not to give his full name, just in case his  
grandchildren are still around – about  
my age?*

# CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS DAY AND LAKENHEATH PROTESTS



Raised Voices Choir, Tavistock Square, London Credit: Michael Preston, Quakers in Britain

## INTERNATIONAL CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS' DAY 15<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2024

BY APF MEMBER, SUE GILMURRAY

Well over 100 members and supporters of many peace groups and organisations gathered again this year on May 15th to mark a celebration of those who have refused to be conscripted into military service.

I have been taking part in the London event, in Tavistock Square, since the year 2000, and APF is one of 13 organisations which plan and fund the event. It is not a religious ceremony, but we gather around the memorial stone which honours those who have maintained the right to refuse to kill; the names are read out of a representative CO from every nation which has had conscription; and a white carnation is laid on the stone for each one. This year they ranged from one executed by the Roman Empire in the 4th century to one imprisoned in Israel a few months ago.

John Cooper of Fellowship of Reconciliation introduced the programme. Semih Sapmaz from War Resisters' International gave an overview of the current situation, and we listened to a female Israeli CO telling us of her experiences. In the face of current news stories, it is good to be reminded that there are many Israelis, and Jews everywhere, who want to see justice for Palestine.

The Raised Voices choir gave a cappella renderings of three songs. These included The ones who said No, a song I wrote in 2000 which has been sung

every year since. (Ask me if you'd like the words or music.) We also heard Cynthia Cockburn's Who do they think they are? a song calling the arms trade to account. Finally, especially poignant given the current war in Gaza, we sang Peace, salaam, shalom.

There were also events in several other towns and cities. If you are interested, Peace Pledge Union's website has a page which gives details. You can even see the Tavistock Square event, which was live-streamed and is available to watch online at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UgKpkZd\\_BB8&ab\\_channel=PeacePledgeUnion](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UgKpkZd_BB8&ab_channel=PeacePledgeUnion)



Caption: Protest at Lakenheath Airbase, 11th May, 2024

## APF JOINS PROTEST AT LAKENHEATH

BY SUE CLAYDON, APF CHAIR

In 2022, it was revealed that the list of USA sites with nuclear weapons once again included the UK. Developments over the past two years indicate that the new B6112 bombs will be in place at the end of the year or early in 2025 at Lakenheath in Suffolk. The last US nuclear weapons were removed from there in 2008 following years of protests.

On the 11 May, actions took place across the UK to raise awareness of this development, including at the American Embassy in London.

At the Lakenheath base, people gathered from across East Anglia, including some local councillors.

Sophie Bolt, from Norwich CND, said: "We know that US plans to deploy its nuclear bombs here at Lakenheath. This will not make us safer, but – on the contrary – make the world far

more dangerous. With tensions still dangerously high between NATO and Russia, siting these weapons of mass destruction in Britain puts us all on the front line of a nuclear war."

During the day Lakenheath was declared a 'Nuclear Free Zone'.

Working with Christian CND, APF held a short service to end the formal session. The service sheet is available on the APF website if you would like to use some of the prayers etc.

Campaigners will return to RAF Lakenheath this summer for an international peace camp, taking place from 13–25 July.

## SWANSEA SAYS NO TO NUCLEAR WEAPONS AT LAKENHEATH

BY SARAH MAGUIRE, APF COORDINATOR

On 11<sup>th</sup> of May, I represented APF in Swansea at a stall, set up by CND Cymru to raise awareness of the return of Nuclear Weapons to Lakenheath. We also invited people to fill out postcards to Rishi Sunak, expressing their concern at the prospect of nuclear weapons returning to the UK. It was particularly encouraging to see that groups of young people stopped to talk to us and sign the postcards.



Caption: APF with CND Cymru, Swansea City Centre

**APF on Facebook**  
 Keep up to date on APF activities and peace news by following us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/anglicanpeacemaker](https://www.facebook.com/anglicanpeacemaker).  
 Let us know if there are things you'd like to see more of on our Facebook page. Email enquiries@[anglicanpeacemaker.org.uk](mailto:anglicanpeacemaker.org.uk)

# SUPPORTING APF

DID YOU KNOW THAT APF IS FUNDED ENTIRELY THROUGH SUPPORT FROM MEMBERS' CONTRIBUTIONS AND LEGACIES?

For a number of years, it is APF reserves that have enabled the Fellowship to function. These reserves are limited and it is important that APF increase annual income. For those in the UK, If you are in a position to do so please consider a standing order. Standing orders allow for financial planning. Below is the information you need for your bank. Also, again if it applies please consider Gift Aid.

If you are able to make a regular donation to APF:

## STANDING ORDER

Bank: NATIONAL WESTMINSTER BANK Bearsted Branch

Account Name: Anglican Pacifist Fellowship

Account No: 79531199



## GIFT AID – INCREASING THE VALUE OF YOUR GIFTS

Did you know that, if you are a UK taxpayer, you can increase the value of your giving to APF by 25% at no additional cost to yourself? Your donations will qualify as long as they're not more than four times what you have paid in tax in any tax year.

This is Gift Aid and the Inland Revenue will send APF the tax paid on all your donations if you complete the form below:

## GIFT AID DECLARATION

Until I notify you otherwise, I would like the ANGLICAN PACIFIST FELLOWSHIP to treat the donations I make as Gift Aid donations. I pay UK income tax sufficient to cover the amount reclaimed on this Gift Aid. I understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax in the current tax year than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

£ ..... from .....

(Enter the amount and date of the first Gift Aid donation to the Fellowship)

Signed ..... Date .....

Full Name .....

Address .....

Please return donations & this form to: The Anglican Pacifist Fellowship,  
17 Short St, Swansea, SA1 6YG, United Kingdom

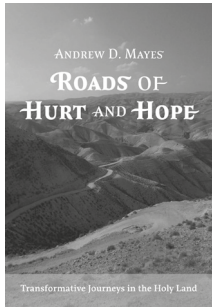
Email: [treasurer@anglicanpeacemaker.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@anglicanpeacemaker.org.uk)

*giftaid it*

## BOOK NEWS

### ROADS OF HURT AND HOPE – LENT COURSE FROM JERUSALEM BY REVD CANON DR ANDREW MAYES TSSF

BY JAN BENVIE, TSSF, APF SECRETARY



*Roads of Hurt and Hope* is a recently published study course for individuals or groups, written by Canon Dr Andrew Mayes while he was chaplain at St George's College, Jerusalem. The profits go to the Diocese of Jerusalem for the rebuilding of the Al Ahli Episcopal Hospital in Gaza.

Mayes takes us on a journey through the lands of the Bible, skillfully weaving the biblical stories of the past

with contemporary voices from the Holy Land today.

Each session is a journey on its own, with background to each location, scripture associated with the locale and thought-provoking interviews with people currently living there. Each session concludes with stimulating questions and prayer exercises.

Appropriately it begins with *The Way of the Patriarchs & Matriarchs*, the physical and spiritual journey of Abraham and Sarah. Mayes introduces us to a priest living in Nablus, who recounts the challenges facing today's Palestinian Christians on their spiritual journeys.

*Via Maris, Way of the Sea*, is the road on which Philip met the Ethiopian eunuch. On Mayes' modern day road we meet Dalia, a Jewish refugee from Europe, who opened a kindergarten in her house for both Arab and Jewish children (her story is told in Sandy Tolan's *The Lemon Tree*).

*The Road Through The Wilderness*, from Jerusalem to Jericho is the road travelled by the Good Samaritan. Here on the Roman Road, near Wadi Qelt, we meet a Palestinian Bedouin whose life today is made difficult by the Israeli military occupation. Mayes also speaks of the ancient voices of monks, including St George of Choziba who founded a still living monastery in the Wadi Qelt.

A study of the Holy Land would not be complete without the *Via Dolorosa, Way of the Cross*, the road that Jesus was driven along by Roman soldiers, on his way to crucifixion. We meet the children, women & men, who live and work on the Via Dolorosa today, very much a road of 'hurt and hope'. This session could easily be used on its own as a Holy Week study.

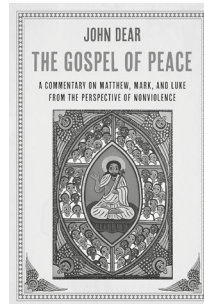
The fifth and final 'road' is *The Road to Emmaus*. Mayes describes three possible sites of Emmaus. He suggests that "the elusive nature of Emmaus... has its own message. ... The risen Christ longs to greet us in the breaking of the bread wherever we might live."

The study course can be used at any time of the year, either in its entirety or each session could be used as a day study.

For those of us who have visited the Holy Land, Roads to Hurt & Hope will evoke memories of people and places. If you have never visited, this book will inspire you to go visit and see for yourself.

### THE GOSPEL OF PEACE – A COMMENTARY ON MATTHEW, MARK, AND LUKE FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF NON-VIOLENCE

BY JOHN DEAR



Peace makers and pacifists are often criticised for their lack of biblical authority for Jesus' commitment to non violence in his pursuit of God's kingdom of justice, love and peace. John Dear is a priest, scholar, author and activist who has served as director of the *International Fellowship of Reconciliation*.

'*The Gospel of Peace*' is an authoritative and refreshing line

by line commentary on, Matthew, Mark and Luke. While being scholarly, drawing as it does from a wide scholarship of biblical theologians committed to a systematic, multi disciplinary approach, it is profoundly accessible rich and relevant. Dear integrates literary criticism, social historical exegesis and political hermeneutics revealing the radical nature of discipleship to which Jesus calls would-be followers.

Dear finds fellow travellers among the lives of Gandhi and his Hindu community; Thich Nhat Hanh and his Buddhist Community; Abdul Ghaffar Khan and his Muslim community; the marginalised pacifist churches and indigenous communities around the globe, as well as atheists who practice non-violence in defence of the poor and the earth and work for disarmament and peace. Dear reminds us that the Kingdom of God is broader than any single tradition of faith. As Thich Nhat Hanh has remarked: 'We are trying to live right now in the Kingdom of God.'

Dear presents in his meticulous commentary a challenge to 'permitted religion' to see the work of God's kingdom is to root out injustice, to raise the poor and needy, to sell and give until 'the mighty are brought down and the meek lifted up'. A gospel that not only re-balances the scales of humanity for each and every individual made in the *imago Dei*. Jesus of Nazareth warned us of what Dietrich Bonhoeffer called 'the cost of discipleship' – the cross not a duvet cover. Only a gospel that is for the many, not the few, governed the teaching, life, death and resurrection of Jesus. In this we trust, come what may.

*The Gospel of Peace* is published by Orbis Books, Maryknoll NY 2024.

# APF NEWS AND UPDATES

FROM THE CHAIR, SUE CLAYDON

As we move through 2024, it has become clear that this could be called the 'Year of Elections'. The biggest democracy in the world, India, has voted. The 29 May vote in South Africa has been described as the most important since 1994. The UK and France have just had their General Elections. Before the end of the year there will be elections in many countries in Africa and South America, including Brazil. The November election in the United States has been filling world media for months. While these should all be signs that the world has a chance to adapt and change, for many that will not be the case.

There are some 'election issues' that transcend borders. One of these is the fact that all governments are increasing their spending on armaments and their militaries. This growing percentage of the world's resources being diverted not only means less funds for essential human needs but also contributes to the growing environmental crisis. If you are voting this year, can you raise this with candidates or other voters?

In September (see Page 10) our joint conference will give an opportunity to join together for the first time in a while. We hope those of you who cannot get to join us physically will do so on livestream. Can I please request you make a note especially to join us for the Annual General Meeting on the afternoon (or morning or evening!) on Saturday, 28 September. The AGM will see election of Trustees and APF is looking for 2 or 3 new Trustees. All meetings are held online four or five times per year, with emails used for further communications. It is also an opportunity to present any resolutions that you think APF should consider. APF needs your support to develop and expand our

work for peace around the Anglican Communion.

I would like to draw your attention to the links for the APF YouTube channel (page 6). A number of APF members contribute to these videos and Arthur Champion does an excellent job in editing them. Please do take a look. The feedback from those attending has been so positive and APF would like as many to see them as possible.

Recently I came across a letter from an APF members sent a few decades ago. She said that her prayer group had recently adapted the Universal Peace Prayer. I think this apparently slight change says much:

*Lead us from death to life, from falsehood to truth*

*Lead us from despair to hope, from fear to trust*

*Lead us from hate to love, from war to peace*

*Let peace fill our hearts, our world, our universe*

## WEEK OF PRAYER FOR WORLD PEACE 2023–4



## WEEK OF PRAYER FOR WORLD PEACE

This October will be the 50th year that people of various faiths have joined together to pray for peace during the Week of Prayer for World Peace.

In 'A Call to Prayer for World Peace' faith leaders, in 1974, stated that "As

today Christians pray together during January for the deep unity of the Church, so we now call upon men and women of all faiths to pray in unity for world peace and for the unity of humankind."

As part of that first call, it was decided to prepare materials for study and prayer. Each year since a Prayer Resource has been produced. Again this year that Resource will be available free in hard copy and online. Please consider ordering some for your parish, prayer group, organisation or cathedral. To do so simply email with your address to [wpwp2021@yahoo.com](mailto:wpwp2021@yahoo.com)

This year the Week runs from Sunday, 13 October to Sunday 20 October. Could you suggest that, in your parish, prayers on one of the Sundays or at another time could focus on peace?

There will be an online Gathering of people from around the world and from many faith communities on Sunday 13 October. There will be links on the website and you can get it by emailing [wpwp2021@yahoo.com](mailto:wpwp2021@yahoo.com)

On each of the 8 days, a digital calendar of prayers/music will be available. These short videos are prepared by Alignment for Contemplative Practices and the Iona Community. Links to open the daily calendar will be on the website.

On Thursday, 17 October APF Prayers will focus on WPWP and contributions are welcome. If you would like to contribute email [chair@anglicanpeacemaker.org.uk](mailto:chair@anglicanpeacemaker.org.uk) and the zoom link will be on the website.

For a number of years the Wilson/Hinkes Peace Award has been presented during WPWP. Do you know an individual, project or organisation that works at grassroots to promote peace and reconciliation? If you do, please simply send a nomination for the Award to [wpwp2021@yahoo.com](mailto:wpwp2021@yahoo.com)



### APF YOUTUBE CHANNEL

You can catch up on our monthly prayer vigils and reflections by visiting our YouTube Channel <https://www.youtube.com/@anglicanpacifistfellowship6478/featured>.

*Please subscribe, like and share to help our channel grow and thrive!*

# THE SPANISH EASTER IS MORE THAN A HOLIDAY

BY APF MEMBER DAVID HUDSON

Living in Spain, I have experienced the passion of *Semana Santa*, Holy Week, at Easter. I saw my first Easter procession in 1984 and was impressed by the pageant of the Easter story unfolding from the triumphant Palm Sunday to the heightened emotions of Maundy Thursday when, at night, the street lights and businesses are turned off as the procession to muffled drums parades around the streets. The crowd remains silent as the impact of the meaning is felt. Good Friday is when the whole Easter story comes to life as the parade of nineteen *pasos* or floats with bands, supplemented with over 2000 people begins at 7pm and goes into the early morning. But I was to find out that it is more than a parade; it is a public declaration.

In September 2004, the Culture Councillor Eduardo Dolon invited foreign residents to help the *Cofradia*, the



Procession Spain

brotherhood, of *El Huerto*, meaning Jesus in the Garden of Olives, to carry their *paso* rather than push it. Having seen the spectacle, I immediately volunteered with other foreigners. We were to be the only foreigner *costaleros* or strong ones in the world. Before the Easter parade in 2005 we were considered a joke by the Spanish Television channels. Now we set the standard for the other *costaleros*. It was the impact that the Spanish *Cofradias* had on us that gave Easter a meaning beyond a holiday.

Converting the *paso* from being wheeled to being carried on the shoulders would cost 30,000 euros. When the *paso* returned from the specialists in Murcia, we looked at it and said no way could we lift it let alone carry it up and down the narrow streets of Torrevieja City for six kms over two nights. It was the heaviest in the parade, weighing 3,500 lbs and it would take 100 men to carry it over the two days. It arrived a few days before Easter and it had to be transferred from the Easter Museum to the Parish church to start the parade. We used the three kms to practice carrying it.

On our first night, we assembled behind the church in front of a cafeteria for last minute instructions then our chaplain said a prayer to give us strength and dignity for our task. We all said the Lord's Prayer in our own language. Our *costaleros* came from France, Germany, Norway, Ukraine, Brazil, Argentina, the UK and Ireland and there was never a problem with different cultures, religions or language.

With ritual knocks of the ceremonial hammer, we lifted the *paso* and began the swaying walk down the steep slope through the crowds to the main street to get to the start of the parade. It was then we saw the huge crowds for the first time. The *paso* was longer than the width of the road so we had to walk into the crowd to pivot in order to swing the *paso* on its axis to get into position to start at the Church door. This manoeuvre was necessary at every corner on the route.

The experience was very emotional – a hand would touch my arm and a tearful lady would say “*gracias*” – old men would doff their hats – young men with arms crossed would nod approval – teenagers shouted “*viva el Huerto*” and small children with mouth open gazed upwards to the *paso* inches away and two stories high. Fellow *costaleros* in Lorca, Murcia, Ubeda, Galicia and Andalusia explained to me that it is the obligation for every Christian to publicly declare their faith at Easter, the start of Christianity.

This is why there is so much passion at the Easter Week processions. I carried the *paso* for 13 years, finishing when I reached 78. The experience of joining with people from so many countries, languages and cultures strengthened my faith and my pacifism. The event was organised by ordinary people who formed *Cofradias* and involving the Torrevieja residents. This tolerance is so badly needed in this decade, something that is being missed by world leaders. Sometimes when going abroad to live foreigners play it safe and miss so much.

I remember, as Sidney Hinkes's churchwarden, being involved in acting out the Easter story, starting at the bottom of Headington Hill in Oxford and ending at St. Andrews church with the crucifixion. This attracted crowds and was very emotional but only done for a year, a missed opportunity.

Pacifism does not stop and end with banning weapons. The war taught me that all lives have value and 84 years on it is still the same.

**This is dedicated to my wife Angie. She always wanted to know why and loved me telling her a story. Easter was so important to us for renewing our commitment.**

## APF ISRAEL-PALESTINE GROUP

APF is setting up an Israel-Palestine Group. The aim is to encourage the church to play a role in seeking justice and peace for our Palestinian and Israeli brothers and sisters. This fits in with the fourth Mark of Mission of the Anglican Communion. The group meets via Zoom every other month. If you would like to get involved please email [secretary@anglicanpeacemaker.org.uk](mailto:secretary@anglicanpeacemaker.org.uk)



# IS THERE A FUTURE FOR INTERNATIONAL LAW?

FROM JAN BENVIE TSSF, APF SECRETARY

We have international conventions on paper, but is international law available for Palestinians and other oppressed peoples?

South Africa's case against Israel over alleged genocidal acts in Gaza at the International Court of Justice (ICJ), as well as the case by Gambia against Myanmar (Genocide Convention) and the case by the Netherlands and Canada against Syria (Convention Against Torture), established that a state does not need to have a direct connection to the events to be able to bring an action.

## WILL THIS PROMISE OF GREATER SCRUTINY OF STATES VIOLATING INTERNATIONAL LAW LEAD TO MORE ACCOUNTABILITY?

On Friday 26 January, the ICJ delivered its interim ruling in South Africa's case, accepting that there is 'plausibility' to some of South Africa's claims, and ordering Israel to undertake several provisional measures.\* In general European nations remained neutral about South Africa's case, whilst the US, Germany and UK spoke out against it, but the ruling certainly echoed significant international concern, particularly from the global south. A statement from the South African foreign ministry called the ruling "a decisive victory for the international rule of law and a significant milestone in the search for justice for the Palestinian people". However, the court has no enforcement powers, its rulings are merely advisory opinions.

## WILL ITS RULING BE EFFECTIVELY IGNORED?

There is little evidence that Israel has complied with the ruling. Certainly to date there has been no pause in the bombing. The situation vis-a-vis humanitarian aid is worsening due to the funding cuts to United Nations Relief & Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) – within days of the ICJ ruling Israel alleged that 12 employees of UNRWA in Gaza (0.09% of the total employees in Gaza) took part in the Hamas attack on 7 October. These allegations have provided an excuse for many Western nations to cut funding to UNRWA, the largest humanitarian agency in Gaza, although in the months following the (as yet unproven) allegations some countries have re-instated their funding.

In light of the court's decision that there are plausible claims that Israel is in violation of the Genocide Convention, will Israel's supporters be willing to be in a position where they are potentially in violation of their own legal obligations? The UN Special

Rapporteur for the Occupied Palestinian Territories, Francesca Albanese has warned that defunding UNRWA is "*collectively punishing millions of Palestinians at a the most critical time, and most likely violating their obligations under the Genocide Convention*".

(<https://twitter.com/FranceskAlbs/status/1751332704056930475>)

For many years Israel has been pioneering a new way of being for states, a way in which 'security' trumps everything: 'security' using brute force & technologies of repression; 'security' for the elite, the chosen; 'security' where international law has no place. This philosophy was amply summed up by Israeli Prime Minister, Netanyahu, on 29 August 2018, "The weak crumble, are slaughtered and are erased from history while the strong, for good or for ill, survive. The strong are respected, and alliances are made with the strong." (Twitter account of the Office of the Prime Minister).

What happens next is a test for the upholding of international law. This is a watershed moment, but the flicker of hope from this ruling must be protected, we must build on the ruling and create a new international order.

\* Provisional measures demanded by the court:

- a) take all measures to ensure that acts deemed genocidal under the Genocide Convention do not take place in Gaza;
- b) ensure that its military does not commit genocidal acts;
- c) prevent and punish genocide incitement and rhetoric;
- d) enable and facilitate the provision of basic services and humanitarian assistance to the people of Gaza;
- e) prevent destruction of and preserve evidence of genocide in its military operations;
- f) report to the court within one month, informing the court of its compliance with today's preliminary measures order, and in response to South Africa's genocide complaint.

# EARTH DAY REFLECTION

FROM REV. ANDII BOWSHER, APF MEMBER

Already at a global level and in some places more locally, the effects of climate breakdown are adding cause and energy to conflicts. To name a few that come too easily to mind: Syria, east Africa, the Amazon, the Congo basin, China and India, Russia. Not to mention that military institutions are among the biggest contributors to environmental degradation and climate-damaging emissions – often uncounted, I understand, in national and global official figures.

As many readers will already understand, peace-building implies dealing humanely, rationally, respectfully and honestly with the causes of conflict. Therefore it is imperative that the peace movement address the environmental crises. It is better to prevent war and violence than to try to clear up during it or after it.

Let's recall the more expansive understandings of peace (shalom) and peacemaking are close to the heart of how

gospel works out and that it gives us a ‘practical politics’ of Christian social engagement. To extrapolate a little: making peace requires justice to be created and maintained, it involves human rights, respect, education in understanding others’ viewpoints and building trust – that’s the practical politics (small p) of ‘shalom’; what makes for peace.

As part of addressing the poly-crisis in which we find ourselves, we need to be helping people to follow Christ into everyday peace-making and the practical politics of building and blessing the social goods that enable peace and peace-making. This is our formational and catechetical mission. I fear our churches are so far away from this that, as the climate crisis ratchets up pressures locally and globally, we are not well-positioned to resist the martial and venial spirits of the

age. Indeed, as things appear currently, we collectively show every sign that we are and will continue to be part of the problem.

In building and blessing social goods, we need to pay attention to public discourse and how to help people to communicate compassionately, with respect, curiosity, humility and honesty. We also have to encourage just, merciful means and messages enabling mutual flourishing and respectful development. There is clearly work to be done in churches’ everyday formation to enable people to understand our cognitive biases and to learn how to unpick ourselves from them. The same cognitive biases are used to create and maintain hostilities as to fuel climate-action denialism. We have a mission in the world of media and communications.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

I am always encouraged when there is space for verse in the pages of our magazine; thank you!

Particularly in the Winter 3023/4 issue, with Sue Gilmurray’s powerfully moving song, accompanying the feature on Vera Brittain.

I had the honour of meeting Vera in (probably) 1960, when introducing her to a small meeting in Oxford when I was a student at St Peter’s College.

Yes, disgracefully small; I wish I had known and read more of her life and writings before having the temerity to invite her to speak to a sympathetic but quite mixed student group. But there can’t be many of us left who can say ‘I met Vera’!

The film of her ‘Testament of Youth’ of course came much later; that would have brought a few more to our meeting!

Incidentally, I also met Bill Hetherington (p.10) several times; such a faithful historian and archivist of CO’s down the years.

Blessings and peace with hope,

Christopher Idle

**Do you feel moved to respond to something you have read in TAP? Please send your thoughts to the Editor at [sarah@anglicanpeacemaker.org.uk](mailto:sarah@anglicanpeacemaker.org.uk). Letters may be edited for length.**

## DIARY AND EVENTS

### APF MONTHLY PRAYERS

A regular opportunity for fellowship and prayer online at 8pm (London)  
Our Monthly Prayers are usually held on the third Thursday of the month.

**Tuesday 6th August, Hiroshima Day**

**Thursday 17th October – during WPWP**

**Thursday 12th September  
The Waste of War**

**Thursday 21st November**

**Thursday 12th December**

If you are not able to make these times, you can view these meetings, and other previous ones on the APF YouTube channel: [www.tinyurl.com/2232rszw](http://www.tinyurl.com/2232rszw)

Email: [sarah@anglicanpeacemaker.org.uk](mailto:sarah@anglicanpeacemaker.org.uk) for the link

### SEPTEMBER 27 – 29TH

JOINT RESIDENTIAL CONFERENCE ‘BUILDING PEACE IN A WORLD AT WAR WITH APF, CHIPS, PAX CHRISTI & FOR ENGLAND/WALES

There will be 3 distinct streams of workshops – ideas / skills / worship. Some sessions will be livestreamed. Tickets are now available to buy here <https://www.tickettailor.com/>

events/jointpeaceconference/1302384. Email enquiries@[anglicanpeacemaker.org.uk](mailto:anglicanpeacemaker.org.uk) for further information.

# CULTIVATING FRIENDSHIP IN AN ATMOSPHERE OF GRATITUDE; PREVENTING FURTHER VIOLENCE: THE CONTRIBUTION OF MEDITATION.

FROM BISHOP PHILIP HUGGINS, APF COUNSELLOR

The Creator’s vision is that we will choose to be friends with God and one another on this beautiful planet, always grateful for the gift of life. Contemplating this vision, within the gift of each new day, is a source of bounteous gratitude. Contemplating, we then help ourselves notice the good things in our life. This accords with the knowledge we now have as regards the ‘neuroscience of gratitude’. Such contemplation helps us overcome any ‘negative bias’ by which we, sadly, habituate ourselves to paying more attention to the bad. The habit of mostly noticing the negative distorts our perceptions. Life is generally not as bad as is the portrayal on evening TV news!

Quiet contemplation helps us keep things in perspective. As we practice gratitude, we can help others to notice the good things in their lives. When we are quietly grateful, we help other people to notice good things, in a friendly way. And the more friendly our daily life, the more hopeful we feel about the future! Remembering these simple realities seems currently very relevant.

## HERE ARE THREE REASONS:

Firstly, the ‘power of constant attack’ makes it harder to co-operate on crucial matters, including how we prevent catastrophic climate change in this crucial decade for decisive action, as evidenced in the latest IPCC report. <https://www.ipcc.ch/>  
Secondly, a negative bias makes social cohesion much more problematic. Public

commentary as regards the Israel/Gaza conflict has vividly strained our social cohesion. Last week, I helped facilitate a time of Multi-faith Prayer and Meditation for Unity, Cohesion and Peace. It was held in the Victorian State Parliament and was quite beautiful. But because of current tensions, this was much more difficult to organise than earlier such gatherings. And I speak as someone who has been involved in this kind of activity for decades.

Silence for meditation and for contemplative listening to each other’s faithful prayers cultivated a unifying spirit and a fruit in gratefulness.

A third reason for remembering the simple realities of friendship and gratitude relates to the practice of meditation to prevent violence.

Paraphrasing, the UNESCO Constitution begins by saying that Wars [or Peace] begin in human minds. First the thought which then shapes subsequent words and actions. We are beings made with self-awareness. We are aware, at least briefly, of what we are thinking. We are free to choose what words and actions will then follow. For me, this freedom reflects the humility of our Creator who, as a matter of love, never coerces.

We cannot be free if we cannot choose, in time, what words and actions will result from our thinking.

“I don’t know what I was thinking” is a tragic lament for both the speaker and the victim of violence. Our faith traditions encourage us to make the choices that

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create beauty, kindness and are carefully true. Choices that are intentionally unkind and ugly always cause sadness.

It is in this context that I and others encourage people to meditate. It helps on the path to genuine freedom. It helps with the integration of ‘Inner and Outer Peace.’ For me, at this stage of life, it seems the most helpful contribution

I can make to the divine vision of a friendly world full of grateful people!

Accordingly, this reflection concludes with a Note on what I offer in my tradition.

*Jesus have Mercy’*

We focus on saying the sacred name of Jesus. Settle where you are comfortable.

Sitting is best. Lying down induces sleep! Settle. Close your eyes. A few deep breaths to help your mind and body settle together. Deep breaths but not to the point of strain. When settled, simply repeat over “to Yourself” the short prayer:

‘Jesus have mercy’

“Mercy” means compassion. Our prayer takes us into the compassionate heart of God. The only instruction is to repeat the prayer under your breath, rather effortlessly. When you lose the prayer, find you are thinking of other things, gently return to praying over

*“Jesus have mercy”*

Meditate this way for some 20 minutes. Then take your time to slowly open your eyes. Sit in silence a while.

This is an ancient technique of Christian meditation. Much is written about the Jesus Prayer or the ‘Prayer of the Heart’. You may know this already. (There are longer versions at [www.orthodoxprayer.org](http://www.orthodoxprayer.org).)

The key is to practise the prayer. We can pray ‘Jesus have mercy’ anywhere, including whilst we are walking, even swimming! It is simple, yet profound, like Holy Communion.

Over time, as a matter of grace, we may find the prayer is praying in us and has rather descended from the top of our head into our heart. Hence, sometimes the prayer is called “The Prayer of the Heart”.

**TWO REASONS FOR PRAYING ‘JESUS HAVE MERCY’ A PRAGMATIC REASON**

We do become what we think. Our thoughts shape our words and actions. We therefore must be careful regarding

what we think about and what we let influence our thinking. We are blessed with the capacity of self-awareness – the capacity to be aware of what we are thinking.

When we become aware of thoughts that are not our highest – that is, are not the most true, the kindest and most beautiful – we then can insert into our thinking ‘Jesus have Mercy’ before we lose that self-awareness and just become absorbed in lesser and more negative thinking.

The crucial choice is to heal and not to harm...to give and forgive.

The human mind can become a closed system – rather totalitarian – unless we practice our gift of self-awareness. Destructive and self-destructive acts can follow if people get trapped in their thinking. Sometimes people look back and say, “What was I thinking?”

Praying inwardly ‘Jesus have Mercy’, is a circuit breaker that allows us to retain a greater freedom to choose what we will think about, then say and do.

The prayer echoes back to moments in the Gospels when desperate people called out, in varied ways ‘Jesus have mercy’ as Jesus passed by.

(Matthew 20:30-34; Luke 18:38-39; Matthew 15:22; Mark 10:47-48) These folk knew they needed help and hoped that Jesus might be able to help, which He did, as a matter of divine compassion.

**A SECOND REASON TO PRAY CONTINUALLY ‘JESUS HAVE MERCY’ PERTAINS TO DIVINE COMMUNION**

There is such power and beauty in the name of Jesus. The New Testament says this is the name above all names. (Philippians 2:9)

Mysteriously and wonderfully, because of the resurrection, there is a relationship between Name and Presence. As we speak Jesus’ name, we can become aware of the presence of the risen Jesus, in Holy Spirit. This was and is Jesus’ promise to us. (Matthew 18:20)

The Gospel of Matthew closes with the risen Jesus saying to the disciples and to us all,

*“And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”*  
(Matthew 28:20).

Accordingly, as we pray ‘Jesus have Mercy’, other promises of Jesus take on greater vitality.

*“Come to me all who labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest.”* (Matthew 11:28)

Each of us has matters laid on our hearts. Some we hold in common. Some are more personal. This service of deeper, sustained prayer and meditation is what we are all requested to offer. I have shared here what I find helpful. We are encouraged to each pray and meditate as best we can.

**Copies of TAP are available on our website [apf.org.uk](http://apf.org.uk)**