



Church and Peace Newsletter Spring 2014

„... by not escaping towards Galilee through the Kidron Valley and the Jewish desert on that night on the Mount of Olives, Jesus demonstrated simply and clearly how deadly serious he was about his Gospel, his message of the presence of the kingdom of God, right until the end. At no time and under no conditions did he equivocate or disavow his good news. Whoever heard of him and met him openly, honestly and without prejudice, would never after be able to ignore his Gospel that 'the kingdom of God is here'.”

Meinrad Limbeck

Dear friends,

Easter greetings! When this edition of our newsletter is in your hands and you read it we may know more about the developments in the Ukraine. The news from Eastern Europe has supplanted the news from Syria, and the brief flare-up of demonstrations for change among Bosnian citizens hardly roused the attention of the news agencies in the west. Nevertheless that was one of the hopeful news items in our network during the past months. People in Bosnia have been going into the streets because they neither can nor will continue to live in an ethnically divided country. In their demonstrations they tied together their three flags – the Bosnian, Croatian and Serbian, which all stand for Bosnia. They marched through the streets together in order to show their politicians that the time of separation must come to an end, in order to open a path into future for the country. Although I am not really in favour of national symbols, this image moves me. The people want to step out at long last from their past and dare to take steps for a common future.

The three countries named above lie on the periphery of Europe. And yet they have something to do with us. For in all three cases the European Union plays a role. We often have the feeling that Europe is far away. And yet we are this Europe. It is our project of living together in peace and a political culture of round tables, where we engage in talks until we can take common steps. It is sometimes strenuous but always worthwhile. Not only when we look beyond the edge of the growing Union does this become clear to us once more. We cannot let „the others“ pay the price for our experiment, which has long since become a firm fact: those who are not allowed in or those who need support within Europe. One aspect of this is participation in the European elections on May 25.

Content:

- p. 1 Editorial
- p. 2 Impulses from the WCC-Assembly in Busan
- p. 4 Church and Peace Representative Kees Nieuwerth reports on WCC Busan Assembly
- p. 7 Believers for Peace stand up
- p. 9 Declaration for Peace
- p.10 Courage in the face of granades and stones
- p.12 Announcements

Davora Lorreković

New impulses from Busan – an ecumenical paradigm shift, a sign of hope, new departures

by Antje Heider-Rottwilm

Although I was not in Busan myself, I have been very much encouraged by the World Council of Churches – WCC – Assembly. And I am sure that it will also provide new impulses for Church and Peace. I see signs of hope and a paradigm shift. These show the significance of the theological sea-change, in which the churches around the world find themselves.

The Assembly accepted or agreed various reports which were the result of processes of thinking and discussion, some of which had been under way for a number of years. What has changed?

1. In the unity statement, “**God’s Gift and Call to Unity – and our Commitment**”, the churches state that the **diversity** of the various churches and denominations is **not a sign of sin** and is not in contradiction to “the one church of Jesus Christ”, but can instead be seen as a **sign of the diversity of cultures and traditions** in which it is possible to sense the presence of God. “The unity of the Church is not uniformity; diversity is also a gift, creative and life-giving. But diversity cannot be so great that those in Christ become strangers and enemies to one another, thus damaging the uniting reality of life in Christ.”
2. There is a thread which runs through all the documents of the Assembly: the recognition that we must turn away from our anthropocentrism towards a global theology and spirituality in which a central place is given to the **unity of all life in God’s creation** with all its biological, cultural and religious diversity. The mission statement “**Together towards Life: Mission in Changing Landscapes**” reads:
“(19). Mission is the overflow of the infinite love of the Triune God. God’s mission begins with the act of creation. Creation’s life and God’s life are entwined. The mission of God’s Spirit encompasses us all in an ever-giving act of grace. We are therefore called to move beyond a narrowly human-centred approach and to embrace forms of mission which express our reconciled relationship with all created life. We hear the cry of the earth as we listen to the cries of the poor and we know that from its beginning the earth has cried out to God over humanity’s injustice (Gen. 4:10).”
And in the document “**An Ecumenical Call to Just Peace**” it says:
“(26). Just Peace and caring for creation.
God made all things good and has entrusted humankind with the responsibility to care for creation (Gen. 2:4b–9). The exploitation of the natural world and the misuse of its finite resources disclose a pattern of violence that often benefits some people at the expense of many. We know that all creation groans to be set free, not least from the abusive actions of humans (Romans 8:22). As people of faith, we acknowledge our guilt for the damage we have done to creation and all living things, through action and our inaction. The vision of Just Peace is much more than the restoration of right relationships in community; it also compels human beings to care for the earth as our home.”
3. Another turning point in the ecumenical movement is to be found in the consensus that the “**Just War**” **paradigm has become obsolete** – and that our task is to ac-

tively create “Just Peace”. It is not least the “Decade to Overcome Violence”, with its many diverse processes of action and discussion, which led to the document “**An Ecumenical Call to Just Peace**” stating:

“(4). Jesus told us to love our enemies, pray for our persecutors, and not to use deadly weapons. His peace is expressed by the spirit of the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3–11). Despite persecution, he remains steadfast in his active nonviolence, even to death. His life of commitment to justice ends on a cross, an instrument of torture and execution. With the resurrection of Jesus, God confirms that such steadfast love, such obedience, such trust, leads to life. This is true also for us.”

“(10). The churches have1,02 struggled with their disagreement on this matter for decades; however, the Way of Just Peace now compels us to move forward. Yet, to condemn war is not enough; we must do everything in our power to promote justice and peaceful cooperation among peoples and nations. The Way of Just Peace is fundamentally different from the concept of “just war” and much more than criteria for protecting people from the unjust use of force; in addition to silencing weapons it embraces social justice, the rule of law, respect for human rights and shared human security.”



World Council of Churches
10th Assembly
30 October to 8 November 2013
Busan, Republic of Korea

4. All the statements of the Assembly bear the hallmarks of the way in which listening to the Bible, political analysis, and the development of political strategies are closely bound up together. And they bear the hallmarks of a spirituality which both permeates and undergirds them and names prayer as a key dimension – a **spirituality of the connectedness of all living beings**.

It was just a logical next step for the Assembly to call on us to join a global “Pilgrimage” of Justice and Peace”, which we will travel on together during the few years until the next Assembly.

So now I come to the impulses from Busan as regards **methods and processes**:

1. In all the documents it becomes clear that it is all about the member churches, **local fellowship**, and valuing the responsibility and skills of local initiatives and churches.
2. A further characteristic of the WCC documents: none of the papers were presented as a final theological product; in each of them it is noticeable that it is about a **process**, a movement, a struggle to tease out lessons from the sharing of experiences. Again and again it says: “We are on the way...”
3. The pictures of the Peace Train to Busan and of the Assembly show a great **many young people** – not only grey-haired veterans of the ecumenical world. A lot of active young people from Germany were involved as well, e.g. from MEET (More Ecumenical Empowerment Together) – This allows us to hope that the movement will keep going with new impulses!

4. The **Pilgrimage for Justice and Peace** is an invitation to connect with the spiritual praxis of a shared spiritual journey and to seek living places, where nourishment, healing, and power (to resist) can be found; to set off from there to places of learning, places of pain, flashpoints, in order to act together with courage, resisting and healing. Out of these spiritual journeys, “maps” could be created with regional, national, and global networks of routes and actions – for the healing of the whole of creation.
5. And finally: In the unity statement it says under “**God’s call to unity today**”:
“(9). On our ecumenical journey we have come to understand more about God’s call to the Church to serve the unity of all creation. The vocation of the Church is to be: foretaste of new creation; prophetic sign to the whole world of the life God intends for all; and servant spreading the good news of God’s Kingdom of justice, peace and love.”

Church and Peace, the Peace Churches and the Assembly of the World Council of Churches

Kees Nieuwerth



From 30th October to 8th November I attended the Assembly of the World Council of Churches at Busan in South Korea on behalf of the European ecumenical peace movement Church and Peace, the worldwide peace movement International Fellowship of Reconciliation (IFOR) and FWCC-EMES (European and Middle East Section of Quakers). Nearly 5000 participants from all continents, more than 140 countries, representing 350 member churches and many ecumenical partners attended.

Quite a few Mennonite and Brethren Churches worldwide are members of the World Council of Churches.

But only three Quaker bodies are full fledged members of the WCC: Friends United Meeting, Friends General Conference and Canada yearly meeting, while Friends World Committee for Consultation – as an ecumenical partner organisation– is an observer.

The overarching theme of the Assembly was: ‘God of Life: lead us to Justice and Peace’. The Assembly started with an opening worship in a large hall of an enormous Conference Centre. Christian symbols were carried into the hall during the worship: a cross, the Bible, icons, candles(Light), a bowl of water (Life) , a box of sand (Earth), flowers, vegetables...

The sermon was about us all being a world wide family. The Bible reading was done by an Orthodox priest who recited/sang the text. It was about the disciples meeting Jesus on the way to Emmaus.

The first few days of the Assembly we mainly heard reports, greetings, speeches and were reminded of all sorts of procedures. A number of previously prepared documents were on the agenda on topics like the church, mission, unity, economic justice and just peace. I was particularly concerned with the latter two. A lot happened at this Assembly that is worth reporting on, but I shall focus on the Just Peace in this report.

In 2011 I represented Church and Peace at the International Ecumenical Peace Convocation of the World Council of Churches at Kingston (Jamaica) where a Message on Just Peace was adopted. In it the churches are calling upon the United Nations to declare war and armed conflict illegal and reject the theory of just war, replacing it by the principle of just peace. In the draft of the message one sentence made me jump to my feet and go to the microphone to object. It read 'Responsibility to Protect is part of the concept of Just Peace'.....I protested, drawing attention to the military intervention in Libya, asking whether those armies were there to protect innocent civilians, or their nations' oil interests? The final message then read: 'we struggle with the concept of the "responsibility to protect" and its possible misuse. We urgently request that the WCC and related bodies further clarify their positions regarding this policy.'

At the previous Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Porto Alegre however the WCC had supported the United Nations' Resolution on Responsibility to Protect. The report this Resolution is based upon is written by the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty and is called 'Responsibility to Protect' ('The Responsibility to Protect', Report of the International Commission on Intervention, and State Sovereignty, December 2001), and contains some 108 pages. Let me briefly draw the attention to what the report does **not**: it does not make any reference to the potential of civilian peacekeeping – with the exception of references to civilian police interventions alongside military interventions. The concept of a 'non-violent Peace Force', highly trained civilians who interpose themselves between the conflicting parties, is not even mentioned.

Admittedly the report on R2P adopted by the WCC does ('Vulnerable populations at risk: Statement on the Responsibility to Protect', WCC, Porto Alegre, 2006). It states that the 'member churches **confess together the primacy of non-violence**', that it is 'the challenge for Christians to pursue peace in the midst of violence', that the 'churches do not believe in the exercise of lethal power to bring in a new order of peace', that R2P means 'above all prevention' and that– the Assembly 'joins with other Christians around the world in repenting for our collective failure to live justly and to promote justice.'

Preceding the meeting at Kingston Church and Peace issued a statement which rejected the 'use of violent means to attempt to create good outcomes, even under the guise of policing'. It went on to 'invite all churches to resist together with us the temptation of justifying justifying the use of deadly weapons even as a last resort' (Statement on R2P published by Annual General Meeting of Church and Peace – 2009).

Before the Assembly started I investigated who of the Traditional Peace Churches (Mennonites, Quakers and Brethren) would attend and urged them to meet several times during the Assembly to discuss our contribution and strategy. The first time more than 30 of us crammed into my hotel room, later we met several times in a meeting room at the Conference Centre. This way we coordinated our efforts to influence proceedings and statements.

We drew up joint proposals for amendments to the Statement on the Way of Just Peace which was to be accepted by the Assembly. After all, a Message adopted by a special gathering at Kingston is one thing, but a statement adopted by the entire Assembly is quite another, it carries more weight. But we were only some thirty of us and of those only a few were official delegates participating in the decision-making of the Assembly! The small number of Quakers present withdrew to discuss the draft Statement on the Way of Just Peace before the Assembly and noticed that it was weaker than the Message of Kingston. We then proposed amendments in this statement, taking up some of the Message of Kingston and particularly changing the part about R2P. As in the draft in Kingston this draft spoke of a relationship between R2P and Just Peace, asking the WCC to ‘undertake further analysis of R2P and its relationship to just peace...’

Having done so we went to the joint meeting of the Traditional Peace Churches. We were asked by the Mennonites and Brethren what changes we proposed in the statement and found that they had also discussed taking up a particular part of the Message of Kingston in the document. It reads: “While life in god’s hands is irrepressible, peace does not yet reign. The principalities and powers, though not sovereign, still enjoy their victories, and we will be restless and broken until peace prevails. Thus our peace building will of necessity criticize, denounce, advocate, and resist as well as proclaim, empower, reconcile, and heal. Peacemakers will speak against and speak for, tear down and build up, lament and celebrate, give and rejoice. Until our longing joins our belonging in the consummation of all things in God, the work of peace will continue as a sure flickering of grace”.

We also proposed that the sentence on R2P be replaced by the following: that the WCC “Undertakes critical analysis of the theory and application of the ‘Responsibility to Protect’ especially in the light of the churches’ commitment to the Way of Just Peace and in consideration of the misuse of such “Responsibility” rhetoric as a new international justification for armed conflict, and given our recognition that the use of armed force is both a sign of serious failure and a obstacle on the Way of Just Peace”.

If participants felt that amendments of draft statements were called for these had to be handed in in writing before a certain deadline...And only the official delegates would decide in a business session whether such proposals to change the text would be accepted or not. So it took some hard work, supporting the few official delegates of the Peace Churches taking part in the decision-making process.

Most of our amendments were adopted. The paragraph on R2P now reads:

‘We recommend that the WCC undertake critical analysis of R2P ... and its misuse to justify armed interventions

It is somewhat of a miracle what a small group of Peace Church people can do!

The WCC is now calling churches worldwide to embark on a Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace... This will provide us with new opportunities for our Peace Ministry!

For more information on the 10th Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Busan 2013 and the texts of the statements go to:

https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/assembly/2013-busan?set_language=en



**World Council
of Churches**

Since 2015 the interreligious group „Believers for Peace“ work together in Southeast Europe/ Balkans. Especially through organizing until today three conferences “By Building Peace, We Glorify God” the group members from Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia and Serbia got to know each other in an intensive and special way.

Through their work in their societies and in Kosova and Montenegro they want to contribute to healing after the devastating civil wars in the region and – whenever possible – take steps of reconciliation with the other ethnic side.

Members come from the Abrahamic traditions - Muslims, Catholics, Orthodox Christians and Protestants. In their work they bring together their respective spiritual practice with their knowledge and expertise on nonviolence and nonviolent direct action. They contribute in many ways to widen the knowledge and competences of their religious communities on peacebuilding and peace service also by modelling interreligious cooperation and inclusion of all nationalities.

Believers for Peace stand up for peace

Ana Raffai

On November 15, 2013 the initiative „Believers for Peace“ issued an invitation to the Moslem Center in Rijeka, Croatia, to introduce the declaration of the initiative. The aim of the evening was to further the peacemaking role of people of faith and to invite them to become active by signing the text. We seek thereby to strengthen individual responsibility and the awareness for peace among believers.

The members of the initiative prepared this meeting. The group met the day before in Rijeka for final preparations. We estimated beforehand how many interested people might attend the event. On average we expected some 30 to 50 people. We hadn't even thought about representatives of the faith communities or the city authorities. The chairman of the moslem congregation in Rijeka is a fairly young and very busy man. So we hadn't been able to develop any sense of how he might report on the initiative, or whether people would or would not attend the event. Above all we didn't know beforehand how people would react. Our insecurity turned out to be unfounded. Imam Mujkanovic is busy in many places, but he has the reins firmly in hand.

Toward evening we gathered in the hall of the new mosque in Rijeka. The mosque is incidentally a work of art, both inside and out, the pride of the whole country. It is the work of the well-known Croatian artist Damonja. We readied our technical equipment and waited for the people to come from evening prayers. And then they began to come and to come and to come... The first surprise was that the hall was full. It can accommodate more than 100 persons. At that point the mood among us of the initiative rose: on the one hand our excitement and joy was palpable when we saw that people were interested in our subject. But our stage fright grew along with it as well.

Four of us from the initiative – Ana, Adnan, Amra and Zelimir – sat down at the table in front. We wanted to present our group and the statement for 5 – 10 minutes. But first came the official greetings, which took quite a while. The imam had taken pains and invited the pastor to give a greeting. The same was true of representatives of the town of Rijeka and the county. This was a further surprise for us. The muslim community considered the event of such importance, to make their interreligious orientation visible in public.

When it was finally our turn, Ana began by introducing the group that had worked out the Declaration and the initiative. The idea was to show the people who was behind the initiative which we presented and which they might sign at the end. Ana invited the „believers for peace“ to stand up, thinking of the ten members of the initiative who had come together to the event. At these words the entire room stood up. The people heard the words „believer for peace“ and simply identified with them. That moment was the most intense and moving surprise of the entire evening.

Just as they stood up in the beginning to identify themselves, most of those who attended the event signed the declaration at the end. A long queue formed at the table on which the pages with the text lay. This affirmation of the entire hall was for us strong support to continue.

The initiative „Believers for Peace“ plans to visit a number of towns in the region during 2014 and present the declaration as we did in Rijeka and invite people of faith to sign the declaration. In addition to the „Peace Event“ in Sarajevo in June, where we will introduce ourselves, an event is planned in Novi Sad und hopefully in Skopje in Macedonia. We have also been invited to a church in Hamburg to talk about our experiences and exchange.

The text of the declaration can be found in several languages under:
www.vjernicizamir.org



Church and Peace
Conference & General Meeting
May 23 - 25 2014
Baarlo, Netherlands

**‘Just Policing’ and
unarmed intervention:
the churches’ dialogue on
responsibility to protect (R2P)**

Panel with

James Jakob Fehr, German Mennonite Peace Committee, Bammental
Jonathan Frerichs, World Council of Churches, programme executive for peace-building & disarmament, Geneva
Antje Heider-Rottwilm, chair, Church and Peace, Hamburg (facilitator)

Declaration of BELIEVERS FOR PEACE

We are faced with violence which is being committed in the names of our faiths and a lack of affirming their potential for peace.

We understand ourselves as believers for peace. We actively oppose violence while affirming the peaceful and nonviolent content in our faith traditions.

We belong to various Abrahamic traditions, Muslims and Christians (Orthodox, Protestants, Catholics) from Southeast Europe. After seven years of continuous cooperation and building our interreligious group we have been enriched by our experience of coexistence and cooperation in the joint project of three interreligious conferences „By Building Peace, We Glorify God.“ With this declaration we start the initiative of acknowledging and gathering believers who are seeking a way to participate actively in building peace nonviolently. In order to strengthen belonging, visibility, and networking we offer this declaration in which we define what the term believer for peace means to us and invite all that agree with these points to sign, indicating that you join us as a believer for peace.

As a believer for peace:

- ***I work for justice, peace, and preserving all of creation.***
- ***I show respect for life by rejecting violence and work for active nonviolence in my personal and societal actions.***
- ***I listen actively and in that way contribute to understanding among different individuals, groups, faith and ethnic communities***
- ***I work for forgiveness and reconciliation inspired by the texts of my faith. I seek to forgive and receive forgiveness. At the points of societal conflict and where violence was committed I work for reconciliation of the parties in conflict because the healing of the community in which I live is important to me.***
- ***I actively participate in building peace and social change where I live and am active in society, my faith community and family because peace is not an event but a process***
- ***I strive to live as the texts of my faith teach so that its peaceful principles can be seen in my behavior***
- ***I work for solidarity and peaceful coexistence of individuals, groups, communities and ethnic groups of different worldviews and faith convictions.***

Courage between Rocks and Guns

Interview by Lado Gegechkori (LG)

The following interview with Hieromonk Melchizedek Gordenko and monk Gabriel Kairasov appeared in Orthodoxy in Ukraine, a Ukrainian language website on January 30, 2014.

Hieromonk Melchizedek (M) and monk Gabriel (G) on the night of Januar 20, stood risking their lives on Grushevsky Street in Kiev between the police and the demonstrators, and in this way stopped the bloodshed for hours.

LG: Tell us, fathers, what made you to go out to the street that day?

M: Once a long time ago I saw a photograph from Serbia, in which one priest was standing between the police and the demonstrators. I was filled with admiration for him—one man with a cross in his hands was able to stop a thousand people on one side, and a thousand on the other!

Our Desyatina Monastery is located very close to the epicenter of these events—even at night in the church we could hear fireworks, shouting from megaphones, and the noise of crowds. When I heard that on Grushevsky Street explosions were causing people to lose their arms, legs, and eyes, I understood that I should be there, so that I would not later be ashamed of myself. (...)

LG: As far as I understand it, you had agreed upon a plan?

M: No, we had no sort of plan. Early in the morning, Fr. Ephraim, Fr. Gabriel, and I prayed together, and after asking a blessing, we went out to the Maidan. None of us had even the slightest wavering or doubt. There was no plan. There was a goal—to do at least something to stop the violence.

LG: And how did the demonstrators react to the appearance there of men in vestments?

M: We were realistic about the fact that it is no longer possible to stop the police or demonstrators, and therefore we were ready to stand under the flying bullets and stones. But when people saw priests in front of them, standing between them and the police cordon, it was as if they had been dashed with boiling water. They calmed down almost immediately. A moment of something like a blessed reasonableness came over them...

G: The people standing there came up to us and said, “As long as you stand here, we will not throw any stones at the police.” This really inspired us all... We were able to restrain people until nightfall—only then did Molotov cocktails start flying at the police. But even in that moment, many of the demonstrators ran over to the police cordon and shouted to their comrades to cease their aggression. Some of these young fellows even climbed onto the roof of a burnt-out bus in order to pull out the protesters, thus placing themselves in the path of danger.



LG: Did you understand that you were risking your lives? After all, Molotov cocktails and grenades were blowing up around you...

G: When we were standing between the crowd of protesters and the police behind their shields, and all around us grenades were popping and cocktails were ripping, a hot bottle landed about five meters from me. But it did not explode... Fire was burning all around us, bottles were crashing and machinery was rumbling, but for some reason this cocktail did not explode. It would have scorched me and everyone around me in a moment, but it only hit the ground and fizzled out. Then I felt that the Lord was protecting us.

Later, however, people started using us as human shields—demonstrators walked up to us and threw stones and bottles with flammable mixtures from behind our backs. At that moment I felt a terrible bitterness for these people, whom we were calling to make peace, but who were nevertheless thirsting for blood. I felt that demons were mocking these human souls, inciting them to rage, and dulling their good sense.

LG: At what moment did you understand that it was time for you to leave the demonstration site?

M: We were not alone there—there were laypeople standing next to us, both men and women. We were watching attentively, so that no one would throw stones and bottles at them—after all, we essentially bore responsibility for them at that moment. Therefore, when the situation came to a head, we decided to step back in order to guard those who stood with us shoulder-to-shoulder.

Some have spoken of provocations and aggression from the crowd, others, about the cruelty and brutality of the police. I cannot say anything of the kind. We did not want to find the guilty party; we wanted to make peace between both sides.

LG: Some are inclined to emphasize the cruelty of the police, while others blame the demonstrators for everything. What is your opinion, as eye-witnesses?

G: At the moment the passions were escalating, a man ran from out of the crowd. Disregarding the cold, he was bare to the waist. The man shouted to the crowd and the police to stop, and then fell to his knees and began to pray fervently. But the police jumped at him, took him by the feet and dragged him to the cars. I tried to stop them, but in vain. I was sincerely sorry for that man—it seemed to me that God’s grace was visiting him at that moment. It is not right to bet in this situation on one side or the other. We saw cruelty from both camps—each of them was sick in their own way.

LG: At that moment, people of all different religious confessions were gathered in the center of town. Did you have any confrontations with them?

M: During those hours that we spent at the Maidan, people from all different confessions came there: Greek-Catholics, clergy from the “Kiev Patriarchate” and the Catholic Church; and what is the most amazing of all—Buddhists!

G: Even a Jew came up to me in his kippah, and standing next to me, started praying. I listened to him and was amazed: he was praying Orthodox prayers with us!

M: To me a young man came up, introduced himself as Seryezha, and asked me whether we accept heretics. “Heretics in what sense?” I asked. “I am a Baptist,” Seryezha smiled. “Of course we accept them. Come on over!”

This place was the borderline of peace, and there could be no talk of “acceptance” or “non-acceptance”.

LG: That is, the common woe united all those who can’t find a common language during peaceful times?

G: There was no division between confessions or ideology. This was not the time for that. When a mother sees a tree falling over the sandbox, won’t only grab her own child—she’ll pick up someone else’s as well, be he the neighbor’s or a street kid. At that moment, we were all related.

And do you know what is most amazing? People started calling us from Kiev and other cities—both laypeople and clergy—saying that they wanted to stand with us shoulder-to-shoulder when we go out there again. Literally just a few days ago, a man who had been standing in the barricades at that moment came to our church, and said that he no longer wants to stand there, now he wants to pray.

Many protesters who saw us there said the same thing. They had thought that a stone is the weightiest thing there could possibly be. But when they saw us, they recognized that compared to certain spiritual things, a stone is lighter than a feather.

(...)

Courtesy of: „In Communion“ – Journal of the Orthodox Peace Fellowship of the Protection of the Mother of God. Winter/February 2014 edition.

May 15, 2014

International Conscientious Objectors Day

First World War Peace Forum with FOR England, Pax Christi, Conscience, Network for Peace, WILPF, The Right to Refuse to Kill Group, PPU and QPSW.

The WWI Forum has been collaborating to ensure a substantial counter-narrative to the commemorations the government is putting on. It aims to tell the stories of the many people who did not support war in Europe.

Annually on May 15 names are read out and flowers are laid on the Commemorative Stone in Tavistock Square, WC1 at 12pm.

This year there is a special focus on women who spoke out against war and its preparation.

Human Rights Advocates including European Quakers ask European Parliament Members and candidates to stand up for Human Rights:

www.stand4humanrights.eu

**Pray for kings (...) and all others
who are in authority over us,
or are in places of high responsibility,
so that we can live in
peace and quietness
*1 Timothy 2:1-3***

European Elections May 25, 2014

The May 2014 elections will be special. Firstly, the newly elected Members of the European Parliament will be able to have a direct say on the appointment of the European Commission President. Secondly the outcome of the 2014 elections will have a far-reaching impact on the future of the Union. (...) These elections are an opportunity to give a voice to your visions and aspirations for the future.. (www.ecumenicalvoices2014.eu)

Vote for a peaceful Europe

Church and Peace

European, ecumenical network of peace churches and peace church-oriented congregations, communities, and service agencies.

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- US DOLLAR CHECK: To the order of Ivester Church of the Brethren (designation: Church and Peace fund), 25056 'E' Avenue, Grundy Center, Iowa 50638-8761, USA (tax deductible)
- Send STERLING CHEQUE to the order of 'Church & Peace' to Gerald Drewett, 20 The Drive, Hertford SG14 3DF or alternatively make transfer by BACS to sort code 08-90-78 and account 50342831 and send email notification to gerald.drewett@ntlworld.com.

