



Church and Peace Newsletter Spring 2012

Dear readers,

A while ago you may have read about a 23-year-old man causing sorrow and mourning by murdering several soldiers and Jewish children in two French cities. This has relaunched the debate about terrorism and security – and the future of young people growing up in depressed neighbourhoods. As we write, the world is helplessly witnessing the slaughtering of more and more innocent people in Syria. As we translate these articles, communication between cultures and religions is standing still, or deteriorating, despite all the technical facilities that make a mockery of borders.

The information, news and thinking in this Newsletter reflect the vision and quest for a different world, in which ends and means meet, where peace and justice come together, where no one justifies war or hatred, a world in which the reconciliations of yesterday are remembered while seeking the paths of reconciliation for today, in order to build what will be tomorrow. Utopia? An illusion? Or rather hope, and a spiritual perspective!

The following lines, applied to Oscar Romero by Bishop Ken Unterer on the occasion of a celebration in his memory, underline the meaning of all that we do, even if we do not see the results. Assassinated in 1980, Romero is a living illustration of this.

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*We plant the seeds that one day will grow.
We water the seeds already planted knowing that they hold future promise.
We lay foundations that will need further development.
We provide yeast that produces effects far beyond our capabilities.*

*We cannot do everything, and there is a sense of liberation in realizing this.
This enables us to do something, and to do it very well.*

It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a step along the way, an opportunity for the Lord's grace to enter and do the rest.

We may never see the end results, but that is the difference between the master builder and the worker.

We are workers, not master builders, ministers, not messiahs. We are prophets of a future not our own.

Excellent reading

Naio-Nöllern der Roche

A warm invitation to Church and Peace events in 2012 and 2013

- **French-speaking regional conference:**

26th–27th April 2012, with Philippe Gonzalez, sociologist of religions

**"Quelles racines dans un monde sans frontières?
Causes et conséquences du réveil identitaire.
Analyses sociologiques et réponses de l'Évangile"**

- **AGM 2012: 27th–29th April 2012**

on the program: elections of the administrative committee, panel discussion on the theme

**The European Union – an unfinished reconciliation project
The countries of the former Yugoslavia and European integration**



On the panel: Tobias Heider (advisor on security and defense, the Greens European Alliance, Brussels), Nikola Knezevic (Centre for studies of Religion, Politics and Society, Novi Sad), Elisabetha Kitanovic (Church and Society Commission, CEC, Brussels), Snejzana Kovacevic (former Peace Centre staff, Osijek); facilitator: Andreas Zumach (journalist, Geneva).

Venue for both events:

Maison Notre-Dame du Chant D'Oiseau,
Brussels

- **German speaking regional meeting: 23–25 November 2012**
with Viola Raheb. Topic:

**Recognizing God's image in each person.
The Kairos–Palestine document**

Venue : [Thomashof](#), Germany



- **international conference: 30 Mai–2 June 2013**

Seek the welfare of the City – The relationship between Church and State

Venue: community Christusbruderschaft, Selbitz, Germany

Church and Peace Initiates a Search for a new General Secretary who should assume her/his duties as of January 1, 2013.

Your profile:

- You identify with or are open to the Church and Peace vision of the Peace Church, (the centrality of the teachings of nonviolence in the Gospels, peace service, dialogue with the churches on these themes).
- You are multilingual (at least English, French and German).
- You have studied theology or you are deeply interested in theological reflection.
- You are open for ecumenical dialogue, pleased to make new contacts beyond denominational, national, cultural and religious borders, experienced in networking.
- You can express yourself well in writing and you can also convincingly communicate your ideas verbally.
- You are a team player.
- You enjoy conceptual work.
- You have the ability to recognise the signs of the times and to communicate these insights in both the public forum and the religious forum.
- You are willing to travel and to undertake professional activities on weekends.

Among your responsibilities are

- serving as representative of Church and Peace.
- conceptually designing the content of regional and international conferences and assisting in the dynamic leadership of these gatherings.
- maintaining contact with members and with the wider network.
- articulating the Peace Church vision in meetings, on the website, in publications, etc.
- encouraging and supporting theological collaboration among members of Church and Peace.
- expressing the Church and Peace standpoint in ecumenical and in public dialogues.
- developing new approaches to furthering the conceptual work of Church and Peace.

Church and Peace offers:

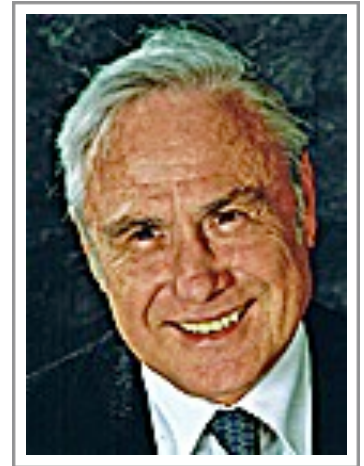
- a diverse network composed of a wide variety of committed, involved groups and individuals.
- working with, and with the support of, an international and ecumenical Administrative Council (i.e. Board).
- an International Office team currently composed of a General Secretary, an Executive Secretary and an Administrative Assistant as well as volunteers.
- a 60% part-time position (24 hours per week).
- a salary of between 16,500 Euro and 22,000 Euro annually.
- a two-year renewable contract.

Please send your application with a cover letter, your curriculum vitae, and two recommendations by May 15, 2012--if possible by email--to Martin Schuler <IntlOffice@church-and-peace.org>.

Hans Häselbarth, former Brother Spiritual of the 'Christusbruderschaft' in Selbitz (Germany) served on the Administrative Committee of Church and Peace for three years. In the following interview he reports on his experiences in this position:

Hans, what did your service and the interaction with the other members on the Administrative Committee mean to you?

I learned to value the other members of the Board very highly indeed. The international composition of the Board was personally enriching and broadened my horizons. I enjoy looking back on a very special kind of friendship which developed. Of course, the spiritual perspective contributed to this, – it was felt most strongly during our theological reflections, in common prayer times, and in the expression of our mutual caring for each other. It was a special joy to me to know that the Communities had their place here, too.



Hans Häselbarth

Was there any one highlight during this period of time?

Yes, – when I participated in the three international conferences in Selbitz, Bienenberg, and in St-Antoine (at the Arche-community), in all three of which I was involved in preparations and served during the meetings. Conference participants Dancing with Brigitte Mesdag will remain unforgettable as well as the personal experience that active, thoughtful individuals are on a common path in Europe. The presence of delegates from Southeastern Europe was particularly important, as they are able to work as agents of reconciliation in conflict situations there.

Now that you are leaving the Administrative Committee, what are your recommendations to Church and Peace?

I am concerned about the gaps opening up between the various groups, initiatives, and individuals committed to peace efforts in our respective regions. Each one seems too involved in its own immediate environment, and too weak with regard to the number of members and finances to accomplish very much. I was a member of the International Fellowship of Reconciliation (German Branch) for decades and could well imagine working more closely with the Fellowship and the 'Initiative für (for) Europa' – possibly even to that stage of sharing offices, fund-raising, and media affairs.

Church and Peace is of course characterised by the historical traditions of the historic Peace Churches, and there were many personal contacts and relationships which were new to me as a Lutheran. There is a broad potential of individuals committed to pacifism in the institutional churches who have never heard of Church and Peace. I would suggest that efforts to expand publicity and to encourage participation by such persons be intensified; furthermore, church leadership could be approached, not only to ask for financial support, but also to intensify contact. It is a sad fact that prejudices still exist on both sides. I assume though that a greater degree of openness exists than we think. The recent reconciliation of the Lutheran World Federation with the Mennonites can come alive even more powerfully!



*Administrative committee meeting,
in the Eirene office, Neuwied*

What are your hopes for the future?

My personal insights into the theology of peace during the last three years were published in a booklet titled "Und richte unsere Füße".....(guide our feet onto the way of Peace).

In this booklet, I describe my hope that our church will become a Peace Church. For me, this would be the message of a new Reformation which many of us are waiting for. There was considerable positive feedback, but I would have preferred even more common reflection on the topic of how we might move away from the entrenched positions toward a new orientation within our churches. I cannot say that I have won many allies, however, and I note that at present – in society in general as well as in the Church – commitments of this nature are not wanted. (An example: Article 16 of the Confessio Augustana of 1530 contains sentences regarding participation in 'just war' – this is totally obsolete, and shouldn't it be re-formulated?)

Commitment is lacking. 'Everything goes'. The Peace of the Lord is a central point of the Gospel which has to be achieved in an ongoing process, out of which a new clarity will follow – this simply does not fit into our present pluralistical concept of dialogue.

My own personal models remain the men and women of the 'Confessing Church' [Bekennende Kirche] of Europe of the mid-20th century. The potentials of violence and conflict in many regions of the earth will very likely increase in the years ahead. How are we preparing ourselves for this? I am waiting for the 'Kairos', the 'appointed time in the purpose of God', when all of us say– like those who heard Peter's sermon at Pentecost 'Ye men and Brethren, what shall we do?'

Taking the message from Kingston to Busan (and beyond) -- Kees Nieuwerth reports on the February 9th to 11th 'reference group' meeting in Geneva. It followed up on last year's International Ecumenical Peace Convocation (IEPC) in Jamaica.

After the IEPC, the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches (WCC) decided to set up a '**reference group**' to carry forward and to further a common understanding of just peace as a policy for the WCC's work.

This group's tasks are to consider, collect and evaluate the results of the IEPC and the responses to the IEPC to it while also helping build an ecumenical consensus on Just Peace in view of the 2013 WCC Assembly in Busan.

I was invited to attend this meeting on behalf of Church and Peace. As in Jamaica, there was a reasonably good balance between the different church families and various continents. Church families included Anglicans, Lutherans, Russian Orthodox, Protestants, Mennonites and Quakers. Some were from North America, Europe, Sri Lanka, India, Papua New Guinea, Eritrea and Tanzania.

The group did not only evaluate the IEPC. but it also explored the topic: 'Peace and Security in an emerging global context'. I felt the need for a paper highlighting the way in which the growing global competition for energy and raw materials on a global scale is causing (armed) conflict and war. At the IEPC I presented a workshop on this topic. So I circulated a paper to the WCC and the participants. The WCC asked whether I would agree to this paper being one of the meeting's official documents. Of course I gladly consented!

I spoke to my paper the first day and expressed the hope that the reference group would agree with me that not only is the dominant economic model incompatible with sustainability, but also that the 'business as usual' mode does not help us forward on the way to Just Peace: a real transformation is required. I drew attention to my outline of concrete ways in which the message of the IEPC could be translated into action by the WCC and to the relevant timeframes and occasions in the coming years –also after Busan – that may be used by the WCC to witness to Just Peace.

Some priorities identified:

- Campaigning to abolish war and declare it illegal
- Intensifying the campaign for "zero option" for weapons of mass destruction
- Strengthening the campaign against arms trade and the proliferation of small arms
- Reopening dialogue on Responsibility to Protect (R2P)

Participants from the southern hemisphere responded that the 'resource-war' and its consequences for the so-called 'energy-security' and 'economic diplomacy' undergirding national security policies and military tactics highlighted in the paper was quite recognizable to them. Right and transparent sharing of world resources is a priority for Just Peace, since it deals with poverty, (eco)justice, and peace!

Konrad Raiser's lecture on 'Recollecting ecumenical memories on Peace and Security and Just Peace endeavours at the WCC' and Dwain Epp's 'Reflections on a theological basis for ecumenical engagement in peace and security: recollecting the past

involvement of the WCC' compiled an overview of WCC's theological statements on peace.

The following two days were dedicated to the IEPC evaluation and the way in which Just Peace could be integrated into the agenda of the Busan Assembly. We then returned to the question as to whether Just Peace represents a paradigm shift.

It was emphasised that Christians need to confess their complicity in the long history of armed violence and war waging.

Also there may be several different starting points for Just Peace that are not mutually exclusive: **personal conversion**, **mutual support** and **public witness**. These have in common the conviction that Just Peace is a calling from God, both a gift and a vocation.

Specific areas of public witness to Just Peace identified:

1. R2P: We struggle not so much with the concept, but with its implementation in such a way that it is in keeping with Just Peace. This may involve strengthening civil peacekeeping capacities and 'just policing'. We cannot afford to wait for yet another crisis (e.g. Syria), to do so credibly at the UN-level, since in that case – as the military resources are always at the ready – the ultimate choice is always the first one, that is the military option!

We wrote a recommendation which stated that the WCC should further its work on R2P, particularly on the responsibility to prevent and to rebuild, explore the concept of just policing and 'concentrate on non-violent ways of intervening in violent situations'. I protested the wording 'concentrate' – as it would keep the door open to using deadly violence in R2P. I proposed that we formulate instead: **and contribute to the development of non-violent ways to intervene**. It was unanimously accepted.

2. Ecumenical peace ministries, such as the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme, Christian Peacemaker Teams, Peace Brigades International, Alternatives to Violence Programme etc., should be intensified.

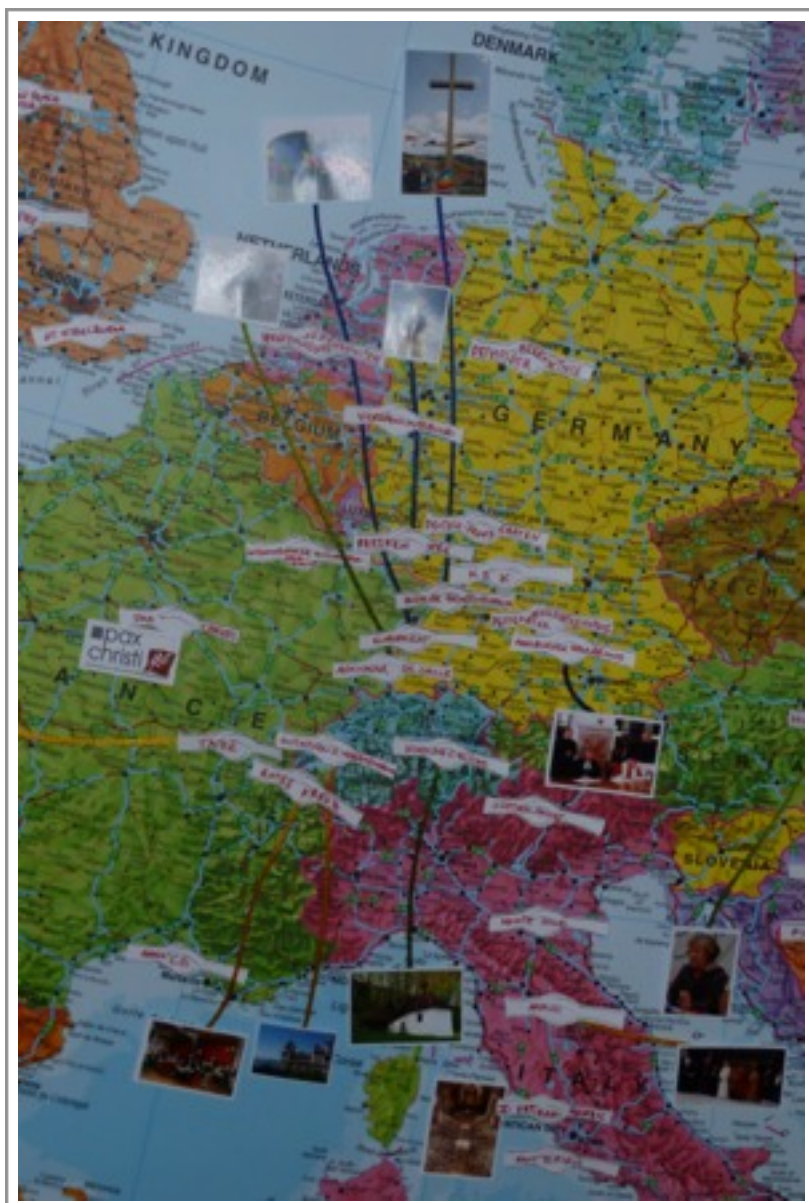
3. Building 'economies of life' as an alternative to the dominant economic model with its emphasis on greed and the resulting 'resource-war': this is another vital ingredient of Just Peace. It places a responsibility on all of us as citizens, consumers, taxpayers and investors working towards the right sharing of resources and addressing structural violence in the prevailing economic model.

4. Transformative, restorative justice and the healing of memories: This involves reinterpretation, reconciliation and vocational training: the Responsibility to Rebuild!

5. Peace Education in the congregation, the community, schools, universities and seminaries. We should invest our energy, time and capacities in making Just Peace part of the bloodstream of the WCC's work, not only at, but also after Busan.

Our final round of exchanges focused on the Busan Assembly. The overarching theme of Busan is: **'God of Life: lead us to Justice and Peace'**. It was decided that we offer the concept of Just Peace not as a (sub)theme, but as an ethos, a working method for the Assembly as a whole. Just Peace is the way in which to approach and to organise the Assembly. It is a new life-giving dimension of the fellowship of the WCC churches. In this spirit a brief advice from our meeting at Geneva was formulated and sent to the General Secretary and the Central Committee.

"How do we build a common future on a divided past?" a European map of reconciliation is to be published in September 2012. Maria Biedrawa reports:



The idea for this map goes back to an event that occurred several years ago. During a meeting of the German and the French branches of the International Fellowship of Reconciliation (IFOR) in Verdun, we visited the First World War underground military facilities. A little girl asked her mother: "Mum, why are we looking at this?" Yes, so many of our memorials in Europe are associated with military events. But if we are here, if we are still here today, if for almost 70 years Europe has experienced peace and war has become the exception, it is for other reasons: it is because of the initiatives of reconciliation!

A team that was formed during a training course by Ökumenischer Dienst Schalomdiakonot (ecumenical service for peace¹) took up this idea and started looking for places, leading figures, communities and symbols that testify to this work of reconciliation throughout Europe, either completed projects and therefore already belonging to history or

initiatives in progress. The team wanted to make them known, to give them a voice, to make them tangible – for us to learn from these examples. But they are also signs of hope, encouragement and strength for peace activists in the midst of disappointments and the apparent insignificance of their daily endeavours.

All these testimonies are now displayed on a map of Europe to be published with an explanatory booklet in autumn 2012. The map will be presented in its current version at the next Church and Peace Annual General Meeting in Brussels – with your help it can be enriched with new examples.

¹ Oekumenischer Dienst Schalomdiakonot has a new name: *gewaltfrei handeln / ökumenisch Frieden lernen* (acting nonviolently / learning peace ecumenically)

The International Fellowship of Reconciliation (IFOR) one of the founding members of Church and Peace, has appointed Francesco Candelari, Italy, as International Coordinator. (IFOR Press release)

Francesco began duty in mid-January 2012 in the International Secretariat in Alkmaar, Netherlands. He is 30 years old, is a member of the Italian branch of IFOR and brings to the position a personal commitment and extensive international and non-profit experience.

The International Coordinator is IFOR's chief executive officer and as such responsible for the International Secretariat. This includes the facilitation of IFOR's network and oversight of IFOR's programmatic activities, which are the Women Peacemakers Programme (WPP) and IFOR's representatives to the UN.

IFOR as an international network exists since 1919, but the spark for its existence came from an international peace conference held in Constance, Germany, in 1914, at the eve of World War I. Its vocation is to work for peace and nonviolence and against war, for reconciliation and against injustice. IFOR's members share a commitment to respect every human being and thus to nonviolence. They believe that reconciliation is possible and that nonviolence is the way of peace. IFOR now has 80 members in 48 countries, many of whom are heavily engaged in human rights work, peace building, peace education and training.



Francesco Candelari

Regarding his vision for IFOR, Francesco says: "An organization that counts among its past and current members seven Nobel peace laureates should assume a leading role in conflict resolution and interfaith dialogue at the international level."

According to IFOR President Hansuli Gerber, the appointment of a new International Coordinator comes at a time of great uncertainty and great opportunity. Anticipating its centennial in 2014, IFOR is challenged, alongside with many other initiatives, to stand for just peace, nonviolence and reconciliation, Gerber said.

Brief bio:

Francesco Candelari was born in Torino, Italy, on 10 January 1981. Since his early life, while his friends and classmates in elementary school were watching Tom and Jerry, he was educated by his father at reading Gandhi and Martin Luther King. Culturally filled with nonviolence, he understood at the age of 19 that his vocation in life would have also been knowing people all over the world, listen to their stories, write their stories and connect them."

In 2000, he went to Burkina Faso thinking he would have been a missionary and in fact he was saved by the locals leaving behind all pretentious ethnocentric approaches. Since then he travelled and lived in four continents. Paris 2003, India 2005–2006, New York 2008–2011 have been his most important steps in his recent personal and professional life.

He worked in the field level while in India and at the institutional level in New York as the United Nations Crime Research Institute (Unicri) Representative to the UN Headquarters. Francesco is also a journalist.

The identity of migrants is a key issue for Philippe Gonzalez, religion sociologist and the keynote speaker at the next francophone conference of Church and Peace.

On morning in September, the headline of a free daily paper called my attention: a Zurich company was suggesting its clients should take a DNA test to detect whether they were of Jewish origin. The proposal raised an outcry among organisations striving to combat anti-Semitism. The same day, Le Monde reported that Roma people had protested to the European Commission about ethnic profiling which the Italian government wanted to engage in to facilitate their “integration”.



*Philippe Gonzalez,
religion sociologist*

Living dangerously

Far from being just anecdotal, such situations reveal what is at stake regarding the way our societies perceive the question of the identity of migrants. All the ways of addressing these issues are not equally good and some of them put human beings at risk.

Choosing your own identity

One element of the offer to conduct DNA tests is immediately striking: identity is suggested to be like an accessory you can acquire in return for the required sum. Identity is no longer just a question of culture and a given, something you receive from another – a parent, teacher or precursor. It is becoming a mixed bag of elements to be acquired, or consumed at will, and which I can cast off when I feel like it. The fact of belonging is detached from any form of commitment. All that counts is the Narcissistic desire to build a “self”, independently of dialogue with others.

Jews and Roma, scapegoats?

The situation of the Roma thus appears to be related to the Zurich case: a question involving society is to be solved by a biometric file. The heavy police presence short-circuits the political and educational measures in place to facilitate the participation of Roma in the daily life of Italy. The biological “given” seems to take precedence over learning a culture. Suddenly splashing tough regulations all over the media has replaced discretion and the time needed for communicating an identity or, even better, the cross-fertilising of cultures.

When there is a lack of time to discover and transmit culture, it disappears. All of a sudden, social categories freeze. The fluidity of appearances sold to us by advertising doubles into anxiety about our identity. Solutions to cultural questions are sought in biology. Strangely enough, Jews and Roma have already served as scapegoats in the West, paying dearly for certain crazy purges. Is an insidious racism returning to our societies where the easy entertainment of TV shows is preferred to the effort of reflecting together about identity, hospitality and how to live together?

Opening up to strangers

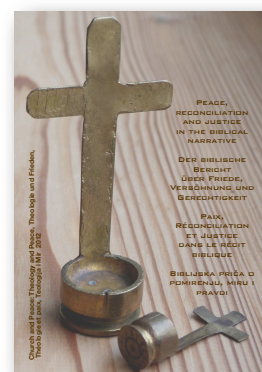
The theme of the stranger runs through the Bible, with many aspects of this question concentrated on the figure of Christ. The evangelist affirms: he came to his own but they did not receive him (Jn 1:11). This refusal is explained by the way in which Jesus shook up the categories of the time and, above all, highlighted the violence of the relationships they initiated. This is why those who crossed his path could not help inquiring who he was. He died like a pariah. Nevertheless, God raised up this disturbing stranger.

We have the choice between detecting scapegoats to prop up our status quo and opening up to the Other, an opening involving abandoning, dying, to rise again in another way of coexisting. And what if, when practicing hospitality, we receive from God renewal of life, our true identity, through the stranger?

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Peace, reconciliation and justice in the biblical narrative, Neal Blough, Church and Peace 2012, 4€ + postage costs

In this short pamphlet in four languages , Saint-Maurice Mennonite study center director Neal Blough demonstrates that peace, reconciliation and justice constitute the central theme of the biblical narrative. Salvation history is a challenge to the Churches to take this message seriously and to put it into practice in today's world



Teatime in Mogadishu – Ahmed Ali Haile, Herald Press 2011, GBP 9.72

In 1991, Ahmed Ali Haile returned to the chaos of his native Somalia with a clear mission: to bring warring clans together to find new paths of peace--often over a cup of tea. A grenade thrown by a detractor cost Haile his leg and almost his life, but his stature as a peacemaker remained.

Whether in Somali's capital, Mogadishu, or among Somalis in Kenya, Europe, and the United States, Haile has been a tireless ambassador for the peace of Christ. Into this moving memoir of conversion and calling, Haile weaves poignant reflections on the meaning of his journey in the world of Islam.



Mediation in pastoral care

Lies Brussee-van der Zee and Annelis Klinefelter-Koopmans
Institute of Mennonite Studies (2011)



The Wulfshagenerhütten community invites youth to a 10 day camp.

choosing an alternative lifestyle
connecting faith with daily life
experiencing community

The base community Wulfshagenerhütten is organising a youth camp for **18–30** year olds from **July 26th to August 04th 2012**

Topics :

- the biblical view of life in community
- vocation
- economical justice

If you are interested, register as soon as possible at erleben@basisgemeinde.de

Costs: **50€**

The "Basisgemeinde" is a Christian community near Kiel (Germany). Around 60 persons (families and singles of all ages) live and work together.

For more information about us please see www.basisgemeinde.de

Cordial invitation !

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

Editorial staff: International Office of Church and Peace

Translation: Elaine Griffiths, Sandra Forrester, Susan Pracht

Photos: Archive Church and Peace and WCC

International Office: Ringstraße 14, D - 35641 Schöffengrund,

Tel: +49 6445 5588, Fax: +49 6445 5070

IntlOffice@church-and-peace.org

www.church-and-peace.org



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