



Church and Peace

International Office

Church and Peace - the ecumenical peace church network of communities, training centres, peace organisations and peace service agencies in Europe

Church and Peace 2020 Conference on 'Images of God and Nonviolence' and Corona

Wethen, 18 March 2020. In view of the current precautions intended to slow the spread of the corona virus (COVID-19), it will probably not be possible for the 2020 international conference and AGM from 15 - 17 May 2020 in Schoorl, Netherlands, to take place. A final decision will be made in mid-April in accordance with the authorities' recommendations.

'The numerous registrations underline the interest in the topic 'Images of God and Nonviolence'', said Antje Heider-Rottwilm, chairperson of Church and Peace. 'The conference should offer space to ask: How do our images of God relate to a theology and spirituality of nonviolence? Which images of God promote violent structures and claims to power?'

We are pleased to now be able to name the contributors - even though the conference will probably not take place at the scheduled time:

After an introduction by **Maria Biedrawa**, Catholic peace deacon and member of L'Arche (Jean Vanier) and the Protestant theologian **Antje Heider-Rottwilm**, workshops will be held to explore further topics and aspects in greater depth.

For example, **Nina Schroeder**, Ph.D., Mennonite theologian at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, offers to work on the connections between images of God and visual art, e.g. violence and victims, power and martyrdom.

Revd. **Beverly Thomas**, who has been conducting race awareness training for thirty years, especially in Christian churches in Great Britain, will raise awareness of the connections between power, patriarchy and racism.

Renato Lings, Ph.D., from Malaga, author of '*Love Lost in Translation: Homosexuality and the Bible*', will explain in his workshop the radical equality of men and women on the basis of Genesis 1 and 2.

Anja Vollendorf, *ecumenical affairs and peace secretary* of the Evangelical Church in the Rhineland, who was formerly involved in peace work with women in Congo, will discuss the connections between language, images of God and nonviolence.

It has become frighteningly clear that sexualised violence also occurs in communities that have emerged from the search for a credible peace theology and practice. The question as to why the image of God, the (peace) theology, and the structures of these intentional communities have not prevented assaults and to what extent also in theology and church a separation between person and their work is possible will be addressed in a further workshop.

The German-Dutch nun and peace activist **Yosé Höhne-Sparborth** has decades of experience with body-oriented, pastoral work with traumatized people in Europe, Latin America, and Iraq and thus with mechanisms of remembrance that prevent reconciliation. She offers a workshop on the connection between power, sexism and patriarchy.

Josephine Azama and **Steward Muhindo Kalyamughuma** are activists of the peace organisation LUCHA, who will be awarded the 2020 Michael Sattler Peace Prize for their work in Congo. They will report on their experiences with nonviolent action in a context of violence, especially with regard to the role of women.

We are especially pleased that Revd. **Nicole Ashwood** from the United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands and programme officer for Just Communities for Women and Men of the World Council of Churches, will invite us to join the worldwide campaign 'Thursdays in Black' against gender-based violence in her workshop and will also preach in the service on Saturday evening,' highlights Antje Heider-Rottwilm.