



# Newsletter

## Ukraine

Peace Appeal and Reflection

## Peace in the Church and the World

Lived Ecumenism

## Nuclear Power

35 Years of Resistance



Photo: Sebby Strauch on Pixabay

## ‘Let Us Be God’s Instruments of Peace Today’

*In response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the group Believers for Peace, together with the Ecumenical Women's Initiative, issued the following appeal for peace in early March to show solidarity with those under attack. Church and Peace members in South-East Europe are among the founders of the interreligious group which opposes war and works for reconciliation in the region.*

As sisters to sisters, brothers to brothers, as mothers to mothers, fathers to fathers, we are writing to you from Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Northern Macedonia, Montenegro and Kosovo.

We are believers who have experienced the violence of war and who today are still working to build peace as we continue to wrestle with the consequences of war in our countries. This experience brings us close to you who today suffer war, separation, fear and dread for the lives of your loved ones. That experience does not allow us to be

silent, that experience gives weight to our cries against war which come from the depths of our souls. Enough war, no more, never again.

We want you to know that we are close to you in solidarity, that we think of you, that we pray for you and that it pains us to feel powerless, to be unable to do more for you. As believers, Christians and Muslims know that peace is God’s will and that God upholds peacemakers. We know that peace is not built by weapons but by human relations, not by the might of the strongest but by justice for all, and especially for those weaker and more

vulnerable among us. We know that peace is possible, that peace requires effort and that it is worth it.

Do not let war turn your soul. We pray for ourselves and we also wish that we are not overwhelmed by a warrior’s desire for revenge, that we are not poisoned by the instigation of war and the illusion that the extermination of the enemy will bring a solution to war. Our commitment to peace has taken us out of the vicious circle of war. This long-term journey that is not without obstacles and difficulties in a world polluted by violence and injustice

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### Church and Peace

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

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Send Sterling cheques to the order of 'Church and Peace' to Gerald Drewett, 39, Postwood Green, Hertford SG13 7QJ or alternatively make a transfer by BACS to sort code 16-58-10 and account 20745001 and send email notification to gerald.drewett@ntlworld.com

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Photo: Church and Peace

## Peacebuilding in Turbulent Times

We live in turbulent times. As a global community we are still coming to terms with the ongoing pandemic, we must urgently address the climate crisis and we have to work at dismantling structural injustice. Moreover, the invasion of Ukraine by Russia has deeply shaken the international order.

'Peace does not spring from violence.' So read a banner at a demonstration for peace in Frankfurt which I attended. It continues to be a challenge to think about the consequences of this statement which is rooted in the Gospel's call to nonviolence.

This newsletter brings you a peace appeal from peacemakers who, in recent memory, have experienced war in Europe, as well as stories about building peace at a local level and a reflection on Ephesians

and the kind of weapons God equips us with – an encouragement to prevail on the path of peace and an invitation to continue the discussion at our international conference this year in Croatia.

In addition to news from the network, you'll read about a conference in France which highlighted the responsibility of the ecumenical movement to promote peace and a commemoration of 35 years of resistance against nuclear power in northern Germany.

May this issue of the newsletter bring encouragement for your path of peace. Suggestions and feedback are very welcome.

With best wishes,

*Lydia Funck*

*'Let Us Be God's Instruments of Peace Today'*

*continued from page 1*

gives meaning and joy to our lives. We wish the same to you.

We call on representatives of our churches, Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant communities, representatives of the Islamic community in our countries as well as in Ukraine and Russia to take responsibility based on the reputation and trust on which their communities have in them. As believers, we are committed to peace. The same is true for our religious representatives, that their commitment is fully maximised and all their potential used to stop the war and build peace.

- We ask of our religious representatives to reach out to their contacts, friendships, acquaintances and areas of influence in the cause of peace.
- We ask of our religious representatives to be actively involved in seeking and finding space for dialogue between today's conflicting sides.
- We ask them to initiate and support a living dialogue in order to find ways for the transformation of the conflict today to ensure the life of all citizens in a peaceful neighbourhood tomorrow.

Our task is to build peace. We ask our religious representatives to accept these tasks and to perform them with heart and soul. Let us be God's instruments of peace today – to the joy of the whole world.

*Support this initiative by signing the appeal for peace (in Croatian) at [www.change.org/p/vjerski-predstavnici-apel-za-mir](http://www.change.org/p/vjerski-predstavnici-apel-za-mir) and contacting religious leaders in your own context.*

*For copies of the appeal (also available in English, German, Russian and Ukrainian), contact the Ecumenical Women's Initiative: [eiz@eiz.hr](mailto:eiz@eiz.hr).*

**Online Prayers for Peace in Ukraine**

Church and Peace invites you to join in prayers for peace in Ukraine! Together with the Fellowship of Reconciliation in England and Scotland, Cymdeithos y Cymod (Fellowship of Reconciliation in Wales) and the Methodist Peace Fellowship, we're gathering online for prayer each Friday at 7:30pm (London)/ 8:30pm (CET)/ 9:30pm (Kyiv)/ 10:30pm (Moscow).

To register and find out about other actions for peace in Ukraine within the Church and Peace network, visit [church-and-peace.org/ukraine](http://church-and-peace.org/ukraine).

**PRAYER FOR PEACE IN UKRAINE**

Online · Fridays  
 7:30pm (London) · 8:30pm (CET)  
 9:30pm (Kyiv) · 10:30pm (Moscow)

Fellowship of Reconciliation  
 church and peace  
 The Methodist Peace Fellowship  
 Peace together

# Lived Ecumenism as Peacemaker in the World

'Peace between the churches, peace in the world?' This was the question posed to the participants of a colloquium organised by the Institute for Advanced Ecumenical Studies (ISEO), together with Church and Peace and other organisations, in March. How can and should the wealth of experience churches have acquired in inter-church dialogue processes be brought into play at a societal level? Several network members contributed to the weekend's reflections.

A memorable example of this know-how was the reconciliation of Mennonites with Lutherans in 2010 in Stuttgart, Germany. Anne-Cathy Graber, Mennonite theologian and professor at the Jesuit Faculties of Paris-Centre Sèvres, put this challenge of healing memories into words: 'We cannot change the past [in this case the persecution and defamation of Anabaptists during the Reformation], but we can change the way we tell it.'

Questions about things which divide us unnecessarily, arguably affecting all our interpersonal conflicts and informing our understanding of social and political tensions, were raised by Elisabeth Parmentier and Joseph Farmelé of the ecumenical Groupe des Dombes: 'Disagreements exist but let us disengage them from misunderstandings. Let's ask ourselves how important these differences of opinion really are and to what extent they actually concern the foundations of our faith.' Reflecting on this and meeting each other with an open mind can give helpful orientation for Christians as peacemakers.

Christian Krieger, president of the Conference of European Churches (CEC), recalled that churches which failed to distance themselves from forms of nationalism contributed to the escalation of conflict in both world wars. This experience of guilt, a devastated Europe, political blocs and the Cold War led to the

founding of CEC as an instrument of reconciliation.

For Krieger, methodology and promise are linked: 'Our path to unity leads through interpersonal dialogue, theological dialogue and locally practised and lived ecumenical initiatives. This is how we can give space to diversity, recognise authenticity and express respect for identity. [This giving of space] thus incarnates itself in a culture and a particular historical context and corresponds to the universal horizon of grace.'

The resurgence of nationalism and enemy images, as we currently see in context of the horrific war against Ukraine, poses a threat to peace, exacerbates questions of identity.

'My nationality depends on where I was born. However, in order to find his identity as a child of God, Abraham had to leave his land of origin,' Neal Blough, professor emeritus at the Seminary of Evangelical Theology at Vaux-sur-Seine and former director of the Paris Mennonite Centre, pointed out in his contribution.

Today, as well, millions of people have to leave their land, Ukraine. They are not following a divine call, rather are fleeing an apocalypse. What identity will they find in their new land?

While Ukrainian refugees currently are being taken in, often nationalism, xenophobia and rearmament lurk as societal fuel for the fire, as could be observed in the French election campaign. Racism is exposed when only some, but not others, are welcomed as refugees. In France, there is a lot of talk about

*Celebrating the Resurrection, at an Easter service in 2019 on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem*



Photo: Albin Hillert/ WCC

visual symbols of religion. Neal Blough had a suggestion: 'What if our outward sign was that we seek peace and justice?'

Lutheran Bishop Munib Younan from Palestine linked faith and the struggle for political peace: 'We have too much religion and too little faith.' For him, it is not a question of being optimistic or pessimistic about peace in Israel/Palestine, rather of trusting with hope in the power of faith with which Christians are at work in the world: 'My hope arose in Jerusalem, not in Washington or Oslo.'

'Not in Washington or Oslo' – a murmur rippled through the hall at this statement. Will our mustard seed faith be effective even in Oslo, Washington, Jerusalem or right now in Moscow and Kyiv, and make possible new life, peace? Political solutions are nourished by faith, hope and love as the 'universal horizon of grace'.

Lived ecumenism which remains in dialogue, wrestles with itself and current issues, opposes nationalism and militarism, and time and again opens up a horizon of hope, is a form of politics. To put the carefully considered values which have emerged from the experiences of lived ecumenism to the service of society is the churches' own service for peace, seen in the words of the Risen Christ, which he pledges to us and we to each other: Peace be with you.

**Maria Biedrawa**

*is a Church and Peace member from France and serves on the Board.*



## Strengthening the Church's Service for Peace

**D**ivision. War. Nonviolence. – With this theme as our focus, we want to gather for this year's Church and Peace international conference and Annual General Meeting on 20–23 October in Crikvenica, Croatia. Here, we will have the opportunity to learn, in lived ecumenism, from each other and from peacemakers in the country and region.

The conference will create space for us to identify our own conflictual issues and conflict solutions, share experiences of success or failure and work with them. We also want to face the difficult question of how to hold on to the Gospel's vision of nonviolence in times of war such

as these and (re-)connect to our spiritual roots.

We invite you to come and practise together how active nonviolence, dialogue and concrete methods of transformation and reconciliation can overcome divisions – so that peace becomes possible.

*Visit [www.church-and-peace.org/en/events](http://www.church-and-peace.org/en/events) to find out more and register for the conference.*

# Constructing Peace on the Ground

*Conference by Stop Fuelling War Explores Local Nonviolent Action*

What an important time it is to talk about peace, civil disobedience and alternatives to war! When faced with an aggressive invasion such as in Ukraine, the call for more arms is understandable, but budget increases in military are a woeful response. It is good to see nonviolent alternatives to weapons, particularly cultural initiatives from football to music, being used in Ukraine. If we can rethink our security, build peace and institutionalise responses other than military ones, we will be protecting people and the planet.

At the conference 'Peacebuilding on the Ground' in February, Stop Fuelling War explored a few such paths with peacebuilders working in situations of violence from France to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Myanmar. We learned that we must arm

ourselves with skills such as understanding of the other and nonviolent communication to build trust and confidence.

Tanya Hubbard taught us about forum theatre, an art form created in the Brazilian slums to give marginalised people a space to express their problems and find solutions. In Myanmar, she has been using role play with Rohingya communities, a stateless minority with limited access to education, to address taboos like intimate partner violence.

Bénédicte Charrier presented the nonviolent communication approach of the French interfaith, youth-led association Coexister as they work to dismantle fixed beliefs which are a barrier to understanding and appreciating others in society. She noted the lack of awareness about peacebuilding in France and a

sense that it is something that only needs to be done elsewhere.

Sharing about his work in the DRC with the International Fellowship of Reconciliation, Jean-Pierre Massamba told how violence affects the people, the infrastructure and the environment, and how the threat that people fear is not nuclear war but rather the small arms that the country is awash in.

The conference was an offshoot of the exhibition 'Citizens, No to Armaments!' which looked at how the arms trade affects our lives and how we can rethink security.

**Karina Knight-Spencer**

*is president of Stop Fuelling War, a Church and Peace associate member in France.*



*Peacebuilding workshop with children in Myanmar*

*Photo: Tanya Hubbard*

**Stop Fuelling War** is building peace on the ground at the Eurosatory arms fair in Paris on 13–17



June, with nonviolent action to raise awareness about the disastrous effects of war and weaponry on the environment in addition to the tragic human impact.

Contact: [info@stopfuellingwar.org](mailto:info@stopfuellingwar.org)

# 35 Years of Resistance in Brokdorf

It was 26 April 1986, the day of the Chernobyl reactor disaster, which galvanised us into action. For the first time in the history of nuclear power, we in Germany felt the effects of the so-called 'peaceful use' of nuclear energy. Vegetables which were already planted had to be dug up. Children's playgrounds were closed. A radioactive cloud raining on our country was bringing down deadly radiation.

What could we do? First, we chose not to remain indifferent to the wider implications of this disaster. Many in our region did not want to resign themselves to what was happening, but rather to do something about it. Christians who belonged to the Solidarity Church in North Elbia asked us at the Wulfshagenerhütten community if we, together with other people of goodwill, would support regular blockades in front of the gates of the Brokdorf nuclear power plant, which was to be the first to go online after the accident in Chernobyl. We immediately agreed.

The date for the first protest was set for 6 August 1986 in commemoration of the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima. The plan: to blockade the gates on the 6th of every month until the nuclear power plant was shut down. None of us suspected at the time that this confrontation would last 35 years. After three years of blockades, many court cases, convictions and stays in prison, we decided to hold vigils to express our protest. We became fewer people over the years; the faithful resisters came from Wedel near

Hamburg, throughout North Elbia and Wulfshagenerhütten.

The special thing about the vigils was that they became a place of genuine sharing, not only about energy use in our country, but also at a very personal level about our lives, our faith, our search for truth and justice. Visitors, friends and media representatives came by time and again. Today, I would say that we were a living congregation which gathered on a regular basis, prayed together, read from the Gospel and exchanged ideas. We grew old together, and some of our companions were called to their heavenly home during this time.

On 6 December 2021 the last vigil took place. Again, we invited people to join us. We celebrated the shutdown of the Brokdorf plant, remembered our friends who had died and thanked God for giving us the strength and patience to carry on our protest for so many years. And last but not least, we expressed gratitude that during these years Germany initiated a turnaround in its energy policies and that the realisation that nuclear power has no future had prevailed. Our longstanding resistance, which was based on hope and building understanding, had been worthwhile in every respect.

**Martin Klotz-Woock**  
is part of the Base Community  
Wulfshagenerhütten, a Church and  
Peace member in Germany.



*Vigils took place for 35 years, rain or shine (or snow), whether the resisters were many or few.*

*Photos: Basisgemeinde Wulfshagenerhütten*

**Editor's Note:** This article was written before the Russian invasion of Ukraine raised questions about Germany's aim to phase out nuclear power by the end of 2022. As the newsletter went to press, the government was standing by its plan to close down its three remaining nuclear power plants.

# Nonviolence – A Commitment to Equality

*The book 'The Force of Nonviolence: An Ethico-Political Bind' from philosopher and activist Judith Butler offers important food for thought, particularly for Christians who are committed to nonviolence and seek to substantiate this commitment. A reflection by Hansuli Gerber, Church and Peace member from Switzerland.*

**N**onviolence is less a failure of action than a physical assertion of the claims of life, a living assertion, a claim that is made by speech, gesture, and action, through networks, encampments, and assemblies.' This statement encapsulates the essence of this book: an argumentation for nonviolent resistance to injustice against people of another identity or

least from a rhetorical point of view – should be subject to the rule of law. Butler also looks at governments' tendency to label dissent and resistance as violence and to treat it almost like terrorism. Personal and collective demons are also addressed, an important point.

Butler assumes that 'nonviolence does not make sense outside of a commitment to equality'. Somehow, we have long sensed this, and Butler's book insists on this perspective. Inequality here does not primarily mean material inequality but rather inequality in the value accorded to life and a person: 'The reason why nonviolence requires a commitment to equality can best be understood by considering that in this world some lives are more clearly valued than others and that this inequality implies that certain lives will be more tenaciously defended than others.'

usually 'committed to inequality' and has its origins in fantasies of superiority or invulnerability. Nonviolence can be quite aggressive, says Butler, and is thus on solidly biblical ground.

Peace church people are familiar with theological argumentation for nonviolence. Here, they are also offered rationale rooted in ethics and politics, along with thoughts on the ambivalence of love and hate, narcissism and the instinct for (self-)destruction.

Those committed to pacifism and nonviolence are occasionally accused of a lack of realism. Butler's book counters this with profound analysis and depth and can help us to be more realistic about the destructive potential of violence while at the same time giving shape to the deeply Christian approach to nonviolence.



Photo: Socialist Appeal, CC BY 2.0 via Wikimedia Commons

*Black Lives Matter protest in London in June 2020. Butler's notion of the 'grievability' of lives is inextricably linked to social justice movements.*

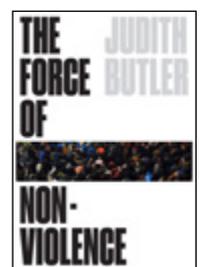
origin. For Christians and people from a church background, this means *embodiment, incarnation*.

The book is important for those from a peace church tradition because it approaches the topic on a non-church level and thus, despite a certain textual awkwardness, talks about the topics which society is grappling with in the present day: inequality, individualism, totalitarian violence by governments which – at

In this sense, nonviolence is not measured by our refusal to employ violence but rather by our active nonviolent commitment to protect people who, from a certain societal perspective, are less *grievable* than others. This is a deeply Christian approach.

Nonviolence, according to Butler, should not be limited to the level of individual morality. It grows out of the need for common resistance to violence, violence which is

Butler, Judith.  
*'The Force of Nonviolence: An Ethico-Political Bind'*. London: Verso, 2020.



## Diary

11 June 2022

Francophone day conference

'Rethinking Security in Europe'

Paris, France

2 July 2022

Britain and Ireland regional day

'The Work of our Hands?

Reconciliation in Turbulent Times'

Bull Street Quaker Meeting House,  
Birmingham, UK

20–23 October 2022

Annual General Meeting and  
international conference

'Division. War. Nonviolence.

"First take the plank out of your own  
eye, and then you will see clearly to  
remove the speck from your sister's or  
brother's eye." (Luke 6:42)'

Life Center, Crikvenica, Croatia

25–27 November 2022

German-language regional  
conference

'Prejudice, Enemy Images and Racism  
as Challenges to Peace Work'

Thomashof, Karlsruhe, Germany



## Web Resources

'Peace, Sustainability and Protection  
for Refugees to Guide the Future of  
Europe'

Press release, 30 November 2021

More Church and Peace press releases

Download and share in your networks!  
[church-and-peace.org/en/documents](https://church-and-peace.org/en/documents)

# Exploring Alternatives to Escalation

German-speaking Church and Peace members met online on 25 March to share their concerns and experiences in the face of the devastating war in Ukraine – a vital space of open exchange and (spiritual) reassurance in a time of uncertainty and despair.

The discussion made clear that the participants, as Christians committed to nonviolence and peace church witness, were wrestling with hard questions:

- Why is the peace movement's peace logic so absent from public discussion?
- How could Germany's government have made a U-turn towards militarisation of foreign policy in such a short time?
- What forms of solidarity in concrete conflict situations should we as peacemakers have prepared?

A paper looking at a resolute and level-headed response to the war, published on 18 March in German by the initiative "Rethinking Security", proposes actionable nonviolent pathways, according to Elisabeth Freise. She represents Church and Peace in the coordination group of the project, which was initiated by fellow network member the Evangelical Church of Baden.

She outlined the paper's points of departure for finding non-military solutions to put an immediate end to Russia's war of aggression, including options to interrupt the cycle of escalation and negotiations on an inclusive European peace and security order. The authors highlight the need to oppose Germany's announced massive increase in military expenditure and plan to anchor military expenditure in law. They urge advocacy for the non-negotiable ratification of the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. They stress that rapid understanding with Russia which overcomes violence is also necessary to address the climate crisis.

Reflecting on Dietrich Bonhoeffer's letter to Mahatma Gandhi, Church and Peace member Josef Freise invited participants to consider Bonhoeffer's ever-timely question of how the Christian message, consistently oriented towards the Sermon on the Mount, can launch a Spirit-shaped and vibrant Christian peace movement.

*Rethinking Security paper on a response to war in Ukraine (in German): [sicherheitneudenken.de](https://sicherheitneudenken.de)*

*Dietrich Bonhoeffer's letter to Mahatma Gandhi: <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0022046920000093>*

**Germany**

***Dresden Centre Marks 30 Years of Ecumenical Peace Witness***

Supporters of the Ecumenical Information Centre (ÖIZ) Dresden celebrated its 30th anniversary during a worship service at its birthplace, the Kreuzkirche (Church of the Holy Cross), on 27 March. The ÖIZ was founded to deepen ecumenical work around questions of justice, peace and the integrity of creation in the eastern German city. Visits to the founding congregations, themed events and a summer festival also are planned in the anniversary year.



**United Kingdom**

***Reconciliation amidst Ecological Crisis***

A three-part webinar series in March organised by the Anglican Pacifist Fellowship and the Community of the Cross of Nails (CCN) provided a creative and reflective space for Christians committed to peace and reconciliation to engage with the ecological crisis. Participants used the CCN guiding principles – healing the wounds of history, learning to live with difference and celebrate diversity, building a culture of peace – to deepen understanding of the role and opportunities of peacemakers confronting the uncertainties of the future together.

**Switzerland**

***Becoming Allies against Discrimination***

In an interactive online workshop on 6 March, Quakers in Geneva equipped themselves with tools to speak out and act against racism and discrimination. Participants practised verbal and nonverbal communication to become anti-racist allies, thus taking steps to further equity and respectful solidarity within their communities.



**Switzerland**

***Reconciliation as Cross-Cutting Task***

At the seminar 'Living reconciled' co-sponsored by the Study and Conference Centre Bienenberg in February in Bern, 80 participants explored what can help or hinder processes of reconciliation. Seminar inputs, informed by science, practical experience and culture, made it clear that reconciliation involves all interrelated areas of society and must therefore be understood as a cross-sectional task. [www.versoehnt.ch](http://www.versoehnt.ch)



## the Network

**Germany*****Kingdom of God in Times of War?***

The Base Community Wulfshagenerhütten and friends from the German branch of the International Fellowship of Reconciliation met for a weekend retreat on the theme 'Kingdom of God' at the end of February. The role and mission of Christians guided by peace theology in the here and now was discussed in a highly relevant manner in light of the outbreak of war in Ukraine. Times of common prayer encouraged the participants, and future joint meetings are being planned.

**France*****Following in Gandhi's Footsteps***

Some 20 participants explored the question 'Economy of War or Economy of Peace?' during a seminar organised in March by CANVA (Constructing and raising awareness through active nonviolence) in cooperation with the Community of the Ark and the community's retreat house in St. Antoine, France. Areas of discussion and possible peace and justice initiatives will be developed further at a future gathering.

**Croatia/Spain*****Podcast Explores Link between Biblical Translation and Censorship***

In a new episode of 'The Priceless Podcast', Church and Peace members Mihael Sečen and Renato Lings discuss how biblical mistranslation has led to ongoing censorship when it comes to issues of love, gender and sexuality. Drawing from his latest book 'Holy Censorship or Mistranslation? Love, Gender and Sexuality in the Bible', Lings invites listeners to approach the Bible with a curious, questioning attitude. <https://youtu.be/yjIHxU2BX3Q>

**Albania*****Hope Guides World Day of Prayer in Albania***

Church and Peace member Merita Meko organised a workshop and worship service as part of the World Day of Prayer in Albania. Under the heading 'Hope', the 2022 celebration focused on England, Wales and Northern Ireland and how, in the face of current challenges such as poverty, climate crisis and (domestic) violence, the community in prayer offers encouragement and support.

*The Last Word*

# God Arms Us

*A Reflection on Ephesians 6:10–20*

In the midst of church discussions about arms exports and rearmament, shock about massacres and the question of how the spiral of violence can end, this letter to the Ephesians speaks to us.

Against these, God arms us: with truth to resist the lies; with justice as protection against apathy and all-consuming hatred; with courage to spread the good news that peace is possible, even now; with the shield

times. And which give a clear 'Yes!' to life and 'No!' to violence.

'War is contrary to the will of God,' declared the World Council of Churches in its founding assembly in 1948. And we must add: Lies and war propaganda are contrary to the will of God. Massacres are contrary to the will of God.

Between God's 'yes' and God's 'no' stands God's Word made flesh, Jesus Christ, who confronted and overcame the powers on the Cross and in the Resurrection. He invites us to take up our cross – daily. This is the only way to end the spiral of violence.

'Put on the whole armour of God, so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ... Pray in the Spirit at all times in every prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert and always persevere in supplication for all the saints' – in Ukraine, Russia and Belarus, and all over the world.

Let us wrestle in prayer with the powers and forces and fight the good fight of faith to which we are called.

**Benjamin Isaak-Krauß** grew up in the Bammental House Community, a Church and Peace member in Germany, and is co-pastor of Frankfurt Mennonite Church. He gave this reflection during an ecumenical prayer for peace at Dornbusch Church in Frankfurt.

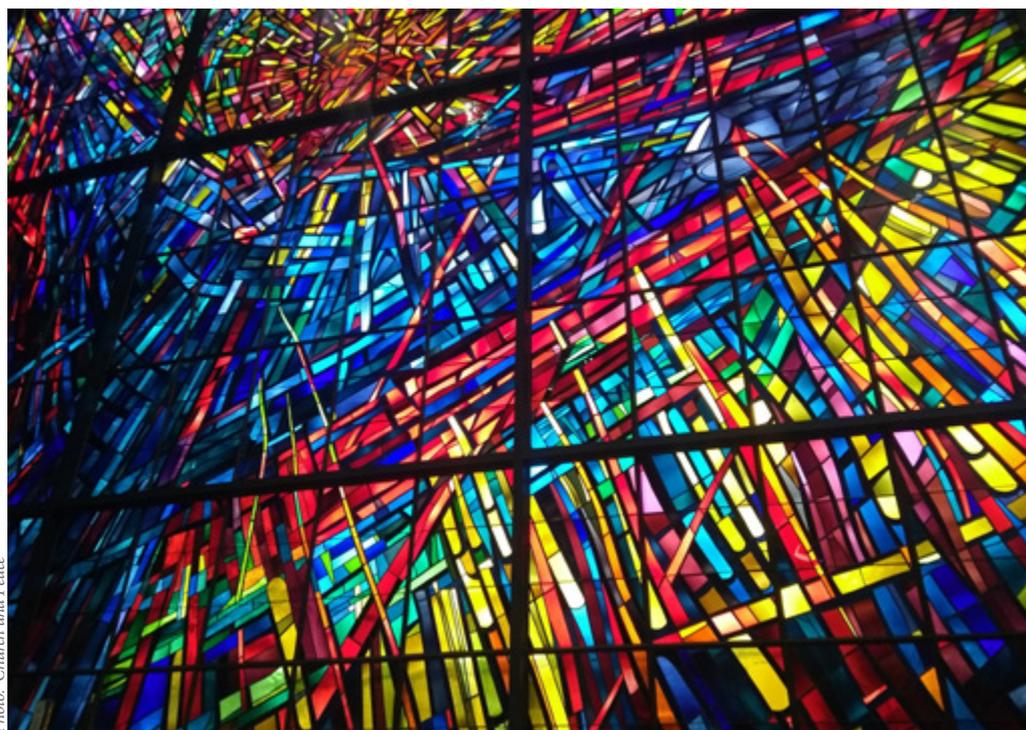


Photo: Church and Peace

*Altar window in Dornbusch Church*

Its story is scandalous: God sends weapons into the heart of conflict areas. But these weapons aim deeper, for they target not flesh and blood but those powers that set people against each other, sow discord, cause wounds of dignity to fester and tempt people to commit atrocities.

These powers are called hatred, nationalism, greed and exploitation, enmity, despair, dehumanisation.

of faith to protect us from sharp doubt and temptation, in the face of the terrible images we see.

Almost all these weapons are defensive; the only offensive weapon is the sword of God's Word, with which the Holy Spirit, which is behind all loving powers, wants to arm us.

What is God's Word? Biblical texts, like this one, which can give us courage and grounding in difficult