Cultivating peacemaking in its most creative and compelling forms

The vision of Martin Luther King, Jr. and many others call us to become people of peace and to resolve personal, community, and global conflict nonviolently. A new movement has proved amazingly effective at helping us embrace the power of love and truth for justice, peace, and care for the earth: “Campaign Nonviolence” taps the most powerful means of compassion & creativity, struggle & resistance, healing & forgiveness. A means for personal growth and a method for effective action, it has become a national grassroots movement.

Campaign Nonviolence, a movement to mainstream active nonviolence, was launched in early 2014 with a goal that thought was overly ambitious: to hold 100 actions around the nation in one week. Yet that Sept., 238 marches, rallies, vigils, prayer services, fasts and festivals in all fifty states took place. It has grown in size each year since. Last year, 1,600 activities were organized throughout the US and around the globe! This year may exceed 2,400 separate events. The Campaign envisions a world with dignity, justice, and peace for all, a vision rooted in the remarkably clear and compelling biblical call to Shalom: for peace, justice, healing... see: campaignnonviolence.org

Lutheran Peace Fellowship has been active from the beginning and encourages Lutherans across the U.S. to participate. For example, the local LPF chapter in Raleigh, North Carolina got involved in 2015. LPF members and several congregations invited other faith communities and groups to work together to host actions – 5-7 per year! Their efforts blossomed to the point they formed "Campaign Nonviolence NC," which has become an ongoing movement in their area.

The 2018 Campaign Nonviolence "Week of Actions" will take place Sept. 15-23. Click on “Events” on the website to see the growing list of activities. You might begin by inviting others to join you in selecting and taking part in an event this year. Some groups organize their own event, adding it to the website list. The North Carolina group has found that an especially compelling activity is a prayer vigil for nonviolence held in one of their churches. (It’s also one of the less difficult actions to plan.) It can include singing, participants naming the violence in our world, a call to reflection, lifting up the voices of both well-known and local peace activists, as well as prayers of healing and awareness.

You can invite your congregation – and others – to use the enclosed Day of Prayer for Peace worship resource on a Sunday before or after Sept. 21 (it’s on our website). Encourage them to share information and invite participation in activity you’ve planned in the “Week of Actions.”

Many LPF members have participated in or organized vigils, children’s activities, processions, workshops, or other actions. Whatever path you choose, it can be inspiring for both new and seasoned peacemakers. Give us a call with any questions...to explore your options...to share your plans...Advocacy, worship, and other resources are on the LPF website...Please consider participating. You’ll be glad you did!

Advocacy Concerns

There are quite a few pressing advocacy issues that call for our attention and best efforts. Here are four notable ones. LPF has, or is planning blog and Facebook posts on these and other urgent advocacy priorities:

- protecting key hunger programs from budget cuts, including SNAP and WIC in the US, and international aid programs serving needs abroad...
- opposing costly, unneeded expansion of US military spending, especially given the huge impact our already bloated military budget has on other priorities... reducing spending on and proliferation of nuclear weapons...
- working for sensible (and long overdue) gun control measures, from state and local ballot initiatives, to federal restrictions on semi-automatic weapons, large bullet magazines, the new "3-D-printed" guns...
- defending Palestinian civilians from harm, especially children, in the face of unfair and abusive treatment by the Israeli military...