Pax Christi USA has a new address!

In March, Pax Christi USA moved into a new office a few blocks from where our old one was located. Here Sr. Patty’s message announcing the move in February:

I’m writing today to inform you that Pax Christi USA will have a new address in Washington, D.C. beginning March 1. Our offices have been located at the Center of Concern for the past several years. We’re very grateful for the years we’ve spent sharing a building with the Center of Concern and we look forward to continuing to work with them on issues of common interest.

Our new address will be 415 Michigan Ave. NE, Suite 240, Washington, D.C. 20017-4503. Our phone number will remain the same. We’ll be moving into our new home during the last days of February and the new address will take effect officially on March 1.

We’re excited about the move and sharing a home with several of our long-time partners and allies. Our new offices are located just a short distance from our current location and we’re right across the street from the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception and the Catholic University of America.

If you’re ever in D.C. for business or pleasure, you have a standing invitation to drop by and visit us at our new location!

Momentum 2014 is coming up! Register today!

Join Pax Christi USA in Washington, D.C., to honor the 2013 Teacher of Peace at MOMENTUM 2014!

With Mary Meg McCarthy, director of the National Immigrant Justice Center and Pax Christi USA’s 2013 Teacher of Peace recipient

June 27, 2014, 6-9pm at Trinity University, 125 Michigan Avenue NE, Washington, D.C.

$50.00 contribution per person (Dinner is included)

Sr. Simone Campbell of NETWORK will be doing a presentation on immigration reform and we’ll have DREAMERS who will share their experiences as a part of the evening.

Registration for this event is now open!

SEATING IS LIMITED AND WE EXPECT A SOLD-OUT event, So Purchase Your Tickets Today! Visit the Pax Christi USA website at www.paxchristiusa.org for more information or to register or call the office today.

Resources from the Pax Christi USA Store

Peace, War and the Christian Conscience: By Pax Christi USA Ambassador of Peace Joseph Fahey. A clear, concise survey of Christian history & thought regarding war and peace. This small booklet is an excellent guide for reflection and action. It includes background on the witness of the Gospels and early Christianity; Just-War Theory, Vatican & World Council of Churches. Co-published by Pax Christi UK and PCUSA. On sale $2+s/h

Love Your Enemies Pamphlet: Fifty-two ways to love your enemies. Simple, far-reaching ways of prayer, study, and action to be practiced each week during the year. Plant the seeds of love and peace at the next event in your community with this small but powerful resource. $11/100 + s/h

Making the case for the abolition of war by Scott Wright

Order these and other resources on the website, www.paxchristiusa.org (and click on The Pax Christi USA initiatives to war as a way of life.)

We believe that if we — as families, communities, cities and nations — really believed in reconciliation with justice, there would be a decrease in arms, military spending and U.S. interfering in the affairs of other countries which would give lasting peace a chance to succeed.

During this post-Resurrection time, let us take the example of Jesus the Christ to heart and put our efforts into fostering peace through dialogue, listening and reconciliation.

Sr. Patricia Chappell, SNDdeN
Executive Director, Pax Christi USA
pchappell@paxchristiusa.org

Peacemaking Quote

“How much suffering, how much devastation, how much pain has the use of arms carried in its wake.” - Pope Francis

The National Catholic Peace Movement

Pax Christi USA

Letter from the Executive Director

Dear Companions on the Journey,

T he last couple of years of his life were lived under the cloud of suspicion. His life was constantly under threat of death. The plots for killing him grew more and more frantic. Wherever he went, some were open to what he was saying; others were gathering evidence to use against him. Certain cities were far more dangerous than others, and in order to go into those places, he had to go in the middle of the night to avoid detection.

Who among us, living under those conditions, would not take precautions to protect ourselves, our families and those associated with us? Who among us, faced all of the above conditions and more, yet no where did he arm himself and his followers with swords or knives or encourage any violent use of weapons. He suspected what was going on around him and yet maintained a posture of peace and non-violence up to, and including, the point of death.

This issue of The Peace Current is focused on one of the Pax Christi USA initiatives which proclaims: “We are committed to disarmament, demilitarization and reconciliation with justice because we believe in non-violent alternatives to war as a way of life.”

Sr. Patricia Chappell, SNDdeN
Executive Director, Pax Christi USA
pchappell@paxchristiusa.org

The Peace Current

Pax Christi New Mexico members Ellie Voutelas and Bud Ryan at the School of the Americas Vigil and Action in November 2013. (Photo by Johnny Zakich)
On the weekend of January 23-26, the Pax Christi USA National Council met for its bi-annual gathering at the PCUSA National Office in Washington, D.C. Ten members of the Council, along with the staff, were present. The following includes glimpses of actions taken by the National Council:

- Staff reports were shared and the 2014 goals and objectives of the staff were approved.
- Council responded to a request from the PC-Massachusetts region concerning the Just War Theory.
- Appreciation was expressed to the staff for the FY 2013 year-end income and expense budget which ended in the black.
- Acceptance was made of the 2012 audit as being presented fairly and in conformity with the Generally Accepted Accounting Principles in the United States of America.
- A balanced budget for FY 2014 received approval.
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- Acknowledgement of ongoing work was given with both Standing and Ad-Hoc Committees of PCUSA.
- Council visited the new offices of Pax Christi USA, effective March 1, 2014.

A highlight of the weekend was having the National Council, staff, two regional leaders, and two representatives for the Pax Christi Anti-Racism Team come together to engage in a process of mutual dialogue, speaking to how the PCUSA Statement of Purpose, the Pax Christi Anti-Racism Statement, and the four identified priorities of PCUSA come together to create a fuller understanding of the identity of PCUSA and the need for its presence in today’s society. Those gathered entered into the conversation using the six points that Rev. Bryan Massingale challenged us with at the PCUSA national conference in June 2013.

This conversation was facilitated by two members of Crossroads Anti-Racism Organizing and Training and throughout the activities of the day, it became clear that PCUSA needs one Statement of Purpose that incorporates the many facets of PCUSA. With affirmation from those present, the Council asked one regional leader who was present at the gathering, Sr. Patty, and two members of Council to join with Sr. Josie in forming an Ad-Hoc Committee. The committee will attempt to draft one statement of purpose. It is anticipated that the committee will have a few meetings—all of which will be telephone conference calls.

Once the Ad-Hoc Committee has drafted a statement of purpose, this will be communicated with regional leaders, PCART, and the total membership of PCUSA, for feedback and input with a goal towards affirmation.

In closing, we value your continued support and involvement in PCUSA. It is your commitment that makes the hope of a world of non-violence a reality.

Sr. Josie Chrosniak, HM is the Chair of the Pax Christi USA National Council. Sr. Patricia Chappell, SNDDeN is the Executive Director of Pax Christi USA. This report was originally filed in early February and communicated to the membership via the website and email network. The next meeting of the National Council will take place in June 2014.
Peace Current

PC South Dakota works to repeal the death penalty
(from Leona Weiland) As the South Dakota House State Affairs committee met to discuss the death penalty, PC South Dakota members worked on the repeal effort, including circulating this letter to their elected officials: On behalf of five chapters of Pax Christi in South Dakota, we follow Pax Christi USA in stating that we follow the non-violent Jesus. The international Catholic peace movement, from the Latin for “peace of Christ,” began after WWII. We focus on issues central to Gospel values of love, life, truth and justice. In our prayer, study and actions, we respect the gift of life given by God who teaches that all life is sacred, from beginning to natural death. Following the example of Jesus in the Gospels, we commit ourselves to God’s way of caring with compassion, forgiveness, mercy and love.

Pax Christi Tallahassee members gather to pray and vigil against the death penalty in our state and the many who have signed in support of it.

PC Florida members join clean water effort
(from Carol Ann Breyer) Citizens and environmental activists from around Florida gathered on the steps of the historic Old Capitol in Tallahassee on February 18 to demand legislative action to protect and restore Florida’s endangered springs, rivers, and bays. About 200 people attended the gathering for “Florida’s Clean Water Declaration” campaign that was launched last year after toxic algae blooms appeared in the Indian River Lagoon… Six Pax Christi Florida members and supporters from South Central and Southeast Florida were present at the event. Karen Dwyer spoke emphatically about the drill at the event. Karen Dwyer spoke emphatically about the drill… Six Pax Christi Florida members and supporters from South Central and Southeast Florida were present at the event. Karen Dwyer spoke emphatically about the drill… Six Pax Christi Florida members and supporters from South Central and Southeast Florida were present at the event. Karen Dwyer spoke emphatically about the drill.

PC Seattle takes Vow of Nonviolence with Archbishop (from Louise McDonald, CSI) On Friday, January 17 twelve members of Pax Christi USA from the Seattle area made a Vow of Nonviolence at the 5:30 PM Liturgy at St. James Cathedral. Archbishop J. Peter Sartain, who presided, welcomed the group to commit themselves to the journey of peacemaking through the nonviolence of Jesus. The group made their vow while holding lit candles symbolizing Christ as the Light of the World. Pax Christi Central Seattle members had prepared for this step by making a day-long retreat last fall led by Sr. Kathleen Pruitt, CSP, Pax Christi USA Archdiocese of Seattle. Deacon Dennis Duffell stated “It was fitting that we members of Pax Christi were able to profess a Vow of Nonviolence on the weekend honoring the life and work of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., a man of nonviolence.” Eugene Underwood, the Coordinator of the Pax Christi Pacific Northwest Region remarked that “we were pleased that Archbishop Sartain was able to preside and Fr. Michael G. Ryan, pastor of St. James Cathedral, to concelebrate. That made the event very meaningful.” And Emily E.B. Meyer, co-coordinator of Pax Christi Central Seattle, reflected that “It was a peace-filled evening standing together in the candlelight, strengthening each other for a year of active peacemaking.”

PC Metro NY participates in panel on legacy of Mandela (from Marie Pace) I never know what I’m going to hear when I pick up the phone or check messages at Pax Christi Metro New York. This time it was a man named Gordon Tap er from the United Nations asking to have someone from Pax Christi speak at an Interfaith Harmony Forum at the UN on Friday, February 7th. He wanted a representative of Pax Christi to address the Christian perspective on the theme of “Tolerance, Forgiveness, and Reconciliation in recognition of Nelson Mandela.” Immediately, I thought this is something someone from the Pax Christi International NGO Team should do. Surely one of them should be more appropriate and articulate than I on the topic and in that setting. At first, one of

the following should disturb us.

On a sunny afternoon in October 2012, 68-year-old Mama Bibi, while gathering vegetables in the family fields in northwest Pakistan, was blown into pieces by at least two Hellfire missiles fired from a U.S. drone aircraft. Bibi was a mother of nine and a grandmother. An adolescent boy, who ventured to where her grandmother had been picking vegetables earlier in the day, “saw her shoes. We found her mutilated body a short time afterwards. It had been thrown quite a long distance and it was in pieces. We collected as many different parts from the field and wrapped them in a cloth.”

This horrific event is highlighted in a new report from Amnesty International titled “Will I be next?” – taken from the worried words of Nabeela.

Drones – pilotless aircraft used by the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (C.I.A.) for surveillance and targeted killings have been responsible for the deaths of hundreds of totally innocent people like Mama Bibi.

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Witnesses described a horrific scene of body parts, blood, panic and terror, as U.S. drones continued to hover overhead.

Secrecy surrounding the drones program gives the U.S. administration a license to kill beyond the reach of the courts or basic standards of international law. It’s time for the U.S. to come clean about the drones program and hold those responsible for these violations to account,” said Mustafa Qadri, Amnesty International’s Pakistan Researcher.


According to the report, two attacks killed civilians indiscriminately in clear violation of the laws of war, while the other attacks may have caused disproportionate civilian deaths.

Letta Taylor, senior terrorism and counterterrorism researcher at Human Rights Watch and the author of the report said, “Yemenis told us that these strikes make them fear the U.S. as much as they fear Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula.”

The Catholic “just-war” tradition holds that proportionality, and discrimination – arguably never able to be met within the context of modern warfare – are clearly not being met here.

The killing of innocent civilians and the resulting fear from targeted drone attacks are considered by many as acts of U.S. terrorism, inspiring many to vow vengeance, thus perpetuating endless conflict and terrorism from all sides.

Please email and call your two U.S. senators and congressperson (Capitol switchboard: 202-224-3121) urging them to launch a congressional investigation into targeted drone killings. And to introduce legislation that would ban all drone attacks and provide a mechanism for families of innocent victims to acquire fair compensation.

The Gospel way of acting justly and living nonviolent unconditional love is the only weapon that can defeat terrorism, and ultimately triumph over evil.

Tony Magliano is an internationally syndicated social justice and peace columnist. Please contact your diocesan newspaper and request that they carry Tony’s column. Tony is available to speak at diocesan or parish gatherings about Catholic social teaching. His keynote address, “Advancing the Kingdom of God in the 21st Century,” has been well received by diocesan gatherings from Salt Lake City to Baltimore. Tony can be reached at tmagiano@comcast.net

For additional articles, information and resources on drones, visit the Pax Christi USA website and type “drones” into the search box.

Photographs

Mock drone attack street theater at the Stop the War rally in Washington, D.C. in 2011. (Pax Christi USA file photo)
Disarmament, Demilitarization and Reconciliation with Justice
The case for the abolition of war

By Scott Wright
Pax Christi Metro D.C.-Baltimore

The title of this article is borrowed from an essay by Stanley Hauerwas, “Making the case for the abolition of war.” The title is challenging, but we cannot deny that our deepest longings and aspirations move us toward this goal for peace. In fact, the abolition of war forms the opening of the United Nations Charter: “We, the people of the United Nations, [are] determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war...and to live in peace with one another as good neighbors...” The times require great moral imagination, and great moral courage. Particularly when we look at the state of the world today, and begin to measure our humble efforts for peace against such a stark reality of war and violence, we tend to get discouraged, and may be tempted to give up hope in ever seeing the day when war is finally abolished. Yet history is full of surprises. Who could have predicted that non-violent movements for democracy would usher in the end of the Cold War, or that dialogue between arch-enemies in South Africa would lead to the end of apartheid? Surely, others before us were discouraged and tempted to lose hope; for instance, in the long struggle to abolish slavery and begin to make peace churches over the past several centuries is a reason for special; especially those [persons] the interventions are intended to protect... More worrying still — and contrary to the assumptions of many concerned citizens worldwide — is the increasing evidence that military interventions of this kind tend to intensify and prolong conflict rather than resolve it.

When we look at the story of the world today, we look at the state of the world today, and begin to measure our humble efforts for peace against such a stark reality of war and violence, we tend to get discouraged, and may be tempted to give up hope in ever seeing the day when war is finally abolished. Yet history is full of surprises. Who could have predicted that non-violent movements for democracy would usher in the end of the Cold War, or that dialogue between arch-enemies in South Africa would lead to the end of apartheid? Surely, others before us were discouraged and tempted to lose hope; for instance, in the long struggle to abolish slavery and begin to make peace churches over the past several centuries is a reason for special; especially those [persons] the interventions are intended to protect... More worrying still — and contrary to the assumptions of many concerned citizens worldwide — is the increasing evidence that military interventions of this kind tend to intensify and prolong conflict rather than resolve it.

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The last twelve years of war in Afghanistan and Iraq make this point. Hundreds of thousands of Afghan and Iraqi lives lost, the majority civilians. Three trillion spent on those two wars over the past decade. What is the alternative? To be clear, our argument is not against the idea of intervening across sovereign borders per se, but the use of military means to do so,” Hauerwas writes. “In our view, approaches that emphasize the incremental process of resolving conflict non-violently by containing aggression, addressing grievances (real or imagined), and building local political capacity provide a more appropriate frame of reference for the resolution of humanitarian crises. Militarism has such a grip on contemporary humanism, however, that such a suggestion seems naive at best and a recipe for disengagement at worst.

Yet military operations in these situations are compelling only because of earlier failures: failure to give political support for implementation of peace agreements; failure to mount appropriate political, economic, or diplomatic interventions; failure to support indigenous peace activists and political reformers; and, most of all, failure to commit in advance the significant resources required to deal with the complex synergy of violence and poverty. In 1993, the U.S. bishops, in The Harvest of Justice is Sown in Peace, put forward the following elements to peaceful-making: strengthening global institutions, securing human rights, assuring sustainable and equitable development, restraining nationalism and eliminating religious violence, building cooperative security, and shaping responsible U.S. leadership in the world. The document concludes: “We renew our call to peacemaking in a dramatically different world. The ‘challenge of peace’ today is different, but no less urgent. Although the nuclear threat is not as imminent, international injustice, bloody regional wars, and a lethal conventional arms trade are continuing signs that the world is still marked by pervasive violence and conflict.

To home and abroad, we see the terrible human and moral costs of violence. In regional wars, in crime and terrorism, in ecological devastation and economic injustice, in abortion and renewed dependence on capital punishment, we see the tragic consequences of a growing lack of respect for human life. We cannot accept the lives and dignity of the vulnerable in our midst. We must stand up for human life wherever it is threatened. This is the essence of our consistent life ethic and the starting point for genuine peacemaking.”

To make the case for the abolition of war, from the perspective and witness of Pax Christi, we need to set our sights high. Too often we lack hope because we lack imagination; and we lack imagination because we fail to trust more in Divine Providence and the Holy Spirit who continues to speak through the prophets and through a prophetic church. The developing field of peace-building and the new framework of just peace are signs of the time and expressions of the Spirit moving in history.

If we had to rely on our own efforts alone, we have every reason to be discouraged — but we are not alone. The twentieth century was full of social movements of religious inspiration which have changed the world nonviolently. May our deep faith, let our imagination and hope be challenged by the Gospel, and allow our lives to be filled with that same Gospel spirit that filled the “cloud of witnesses,” those saints and martyrs and prophets who have gone before. Let us not disappoint them, nor those who yearn to hear the Church speak words of peace in a prophetic fashion, those who are victims of war and those who mourn the victims, those who are sent off to war, and those who return to their families bearing the wounds of war. Above all, let us not disappoint our children, the hope for future generations.
The title of this article is borrowed from an essay by Stanley Hauerwas, “Making the case for the abolition of war.” The title is challenging, but we cannot deny that our deepest longings and aspirations move us toward this goal for peace. In fact, the abolition of war forms the opening of the United Nations Charter: “We, the people of the United Nations, [are] determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war... and to live in peace with one another as good neighbors...” The times require great moral imagination, and great moral courage.

Particularly when we look at the state of the world today, and begin to measure our humble efforts for peace against such a stark reality of war and violence, we tend to get discouraged, and may be tempted to give up hope in ever seeing the day when war is finally abolished. Yet history is full of surprises. Who could have predicted that nonviolent measures for democracy would usher in the end of the Cold War, or that dialogue between arch-enemies in South Africa would lead to the end of apartheid? Surely, others before us were discouraged and tempted to lose hope, such as when, in the long struggle to abolish slavery and torture. Why should the struggle to abolish war be any different? We know that slavery continues to exist. Torture, too, continues to be practiced. Still, it was a very significant step to abolish the moral and legal justifications for both slavery and torture. Why should it not be so for war?

I believe there are good grounds for hope in this struggle to finally abolish war. The witness of the Mennonites and other peace churches over the past several centuries is a reason for hope. The teachings of the Catholic Church since the Second Vatican Council give rise to hope, particularly the eloquent and urgent pleas of the popes, from Paul VI’s impassioned plea to the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1965: “Never again war! No, never again war!” to John Paul II’s repetition of that plea in his encyclical Centesimus Annus in 1991, and later his Jubilee message on the World Day of Peace in 2000: “War is a defeat for humanity!” Or Pope Francis’ words opposing war during an evening prayer service for Syria in St. Peter’s Square: “How many conflicts, how many wars have mocked our history?” he asked the faithful. “Even today we raise our hand against our brother... We have perfected our weapons, our conscience has fallen asleep, and we have sharpened our ideas to justify ourselves as if it were normal we continue to sow destruction, pain, death. Violence and war lead only to death.”

In each instance, we find a step in the conversion of the Catholic Church toward becoming an authentic peace church. This change of emphasis in the Catholic Church is marked by a seismic shift to nonviolence as a moral and legal justifications for both slavery and torture. Why should the struggle to abolish war be any different? We know that slavery continues to exist. Torture, too, continues to be practiced. Still, it was a very significant step to abolish the moral and legal justifications for both slavery and torture. Why should it not be so for war?

In 1993, the U.S. bishops, in The Harvest of Justice is Sown in Peace, put forward the following elements essential to peacemaking: strengthening global institutions, securing human rights, assuring sustainable and equitable development, restraining nationalism and eliminating religious violence, building cooperative security, and shaping responsible U.S. leadership in the world. The document concludes: “We renew our call to peacemaking in a dramatically different world. The ‘challenge of peace’ today is different, but no less urgent. Although the nuclear threat is not as imminent, international injustice, bloody regional conflicts, and a lethal conventional arms trade are continuing signs that the world is still marked by pervasive violence and conflict.

To home and abroad, we see the terrible human and moral costs of violence. In recent wars, in crime and terrorism, in ecological devastation and economic injustice, in abortion and renewed dependence on capital punishment, we see the tragic consequences of a growing lack of respect for human life. We must not let terrorists around the world unless we seek to protect the lives and dignity of the vulnerable in our midst. We must stand up for human life wherever it is threatened. This is the essence of our consistent life ethic and the starting point for genuine peacemaking.”

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Disarmament, Demilitarization and Reconciliation with Justice
The case for the abolition of war

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Greg Boertje-Obed, Megan Rice and Michael Walli were sentenced on February 18. The three, who are part of Peace Now Plowshares, were convicted in May 2013 for their nonviolent action at the Y12 Nuclear Weapons Complex in Oak Ridge, TN. Michael and Greg each received a sentence of 62 months, followed by 3 years of supervised release. Megan received a sentence of 35 months, followed by 3 years of supervised probation.

Pax Christi USA is grateful for the witness of these extraordinary prophets and we ask that you support them in what consequences of a growing lack of respect for human life. We must not let terrorists around the world unless we seek to protect the lives and dignity of the vulnerable in our midst. We must stand up for human life wherever it is threatened. This is the essence of our consistent life ethic and the starting point for genuine peacemaking.”

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This horrific event is highlighted in a new report from Amnesty International entitled “Will I be next?” – taken from the worried words of Nabeela.

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- Acknowledgement of ongoing work was given with both Standing and Ad-Hoc Committees of PCUSA.
- Council visited the new offices of Pax Christi USA, effective March 1, 2014.

A highlight of the weekend was having the National Council, staff, two regional leaders, and two representatives for the Pax Christi Anti-Racism Team come together to engage in a process of mutual dialogue, speaking to how the PCUSA Statement of Purpose, the Pax Christi Anti-Racism Statement, and the four identified priorities of PCUSA come together to create a fuller understanding of the identity of PCUSA and the need for its presence in today’s society. Those gathered entered into the conversation using the six points that Rev. Bryan Massingale challenged us with at the PCUSA national conference in June 2013.

This conversation was facilitated by two members of Crossroads Anti-Racism Organizing and Training and, throughout the activities of the day, it became clear that PCUSA needs one Statement of Purpose that incorporates the many facets of PCUSA. With affirmation from those present, the Council and staff together will try to draft one statement of purpose. It is anticipated that the committee will have a few meetings—all of which will be telephone conference calls. Once the Ad-Hoc Committee has drafted a statement of purpose, this will be communicated with regional leaders, PCART, and the total membership of PCUSA, for feedback and input with a goal towards affirmation.

In closing, we value your continued support and involvement in PCUSA. It is your commitment that makes the hope of a world of non-violence a reality.

Sr. Josie Chrosniak, HM is the Chair of the Pax Christi USA National Council. Sr. Patricia Chappell, SNDdN is the Executive Director of Pax Christi USA. This report was originally filed in early February and communicated to the membership via the website and email network. The next meeting of the National Council will take place in June 2014.

National, Regional and Local Updates

PC USA - Spring 2014

For more news of PCUSA members, local groups & regions, check out On The Line on the website.

PC Metro D.C.-Baltimore honored Michael Walli as Peacemaker of the Year. A group photo was taken of Plowshares activists to share with Michael, a member of Transform Now Plowshares. (Photo courtesy of PC Metro D.C.)

PC Illinois hosts World Day of Peace Service (from Tom Cordaro) The ninth annual World Peace Day Interfaith Prayer Service took place on Wednesday, January 1st in Naperville. This annual tradition was initiated by Pax Christi Illinois. This year’s theme was “Embracing Differences in Our Changing Community.” The service included participation from Muslims, Buddhists, Christians, Hindus and Sikh communities as well as Unitarian Universalists, Christian Scientists and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. “We hope that by our coming together in the cause of peace, mutual respect and in celebration of our rich diversity we can build a stronger sense of community in Naperville and DuPage County,” organizer Tom Cordaro stated.

He went on to say, “Every year we get more faith communities participating in this event. It shows that most people believe religious diversity is an asset in our community that makes us stronger and vibrant.”

PC Austin co-sponsors anti-death penalty observance (from Bob Rankin) “This year, Pax Christi Austin joined with the Friends Meeting of Austin (Quaker) and the Episcopal Peace Fellowship to plan and sponsor our annual ‘Sanctity of Life Day’ for ‘Lifegard’ on Nov. 30th. We gathered at the Plaza in front of Austin City Hall where we prayed, reflected on the death penalty in Texas, the United States, and sang. We had approached a City Council Member asking for a proclamation and received one. Finally we processed through a few city blocks of restaurants and business with ‘No More Executions!’ signs and ‘sandwich boards’ with the names of the 507 executed in Texas since 1976.”

PC Incarnate Word High School (TX), PC San Antonio bring Muslims and Christians together (from Karen Ball) “This past weekend, Pax Christi San Antonio and the Hussar thatQuaker community hosted a special Peace Day event that brought together the rich diversity we can build a stronger sense of community in Naperville and DuPage County,” organizer Tom Cordaro stated. We had approached a City Council Member asking for a proclamation and received one. Finally we processed through a few city blocks of restaurants and business with ‘No More Executions!’ signs and ‘sandwich boards’ with the names of the 507 executed in Texas since 1976.”

PC Incarnate Word High School (TX), PC San Antonio bring Muslims and Christians together (from Karen Ball) Twenty-one Muslim and Christian groups partnered to have an evening ‘In the Footprints of Francis and The Sultan: A Model for Peacemaking,’ September 13, 2013. About 350 people gathered at St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church and then about 150 more people joined the group in the second half of the program at the Muslim Children Education and Civic Center. The program began with the film, ‘In the Footprints of Francis and the Sultan,’ which shares a little-known story of the Fifth Crusade in 1219. St. Francis of Assisi and Sultan Malek Al-Kamil engaged in dialogue which eventually led to peace. Their example is an invitation to join in continued from p. 6...
Pax Christi USA has a new address!

In March, Pax Christi USA moved into a new office a few blocks from where our old one was located. Here Sr. Patty’s message announcing the move in February:

“I’m writing today to inform you that Pax Christi USA will have a new address in Washington, D.C. beginning March 1. Our offices have been located at the Center of Concern for the past several years. We’re very grateful for the years we’ve spent sharing a building with the Center of Concern and we look forward to continuing to work with them on issues of common interest. Our new address will be 415 Michigan Ave. NE, Suite 240, Washington, D.C. 20017-4503. Our phone number will remain the same. We’ll be moving into our new home during the last days of February and the new address will take effect officially on March 1.

We’re excited about the move and sharing a home with several of our long-time partners and allies. Our new offices are located just a short distance from our current location and we’re right across the street from the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception and the Catholic University of America.

If you’re ever in D.C. for business or pleasure, you have a standing invitation to drop by and visit us at our new location!

Letter from the Executive Director

Dear Companions on the Journey,

The last couple of years of his life were lived under the cloud of suspicion. His life was constantly under threat of death. The plots for killing him grew more and more frantic. Wherever he went, some were open to what he was saying; others were gathering evidence to use against him. Certain cities were far more dangerous than others, and in order to go into those places, he had to go in the middle of the night to avoid detection.

Who among us, living under those conditions, would not take precautions to protect ourselves, our families and those associated with us? Who among us would not be tempted to respond with violence to stop the un-truths and the malicious lies that were being spread about us and to gather some sort of security force to keep us and those we love safe?

The historical Jesus, whose death and life we just celebrated, faced all of the above conditions and more. Yet nowhere did he arm himself and his followers with swords or knives or encourage any violent use of weapons. He suspected what was going on around him and yet maintained a posture of peace and non-violence up to, and in including, the point of death. This issue of The Peace Current is focused on one of the Pax Christi USA initiatives which proclaims: “We are committed to disarmament, demilitarization and reconciliation with justice because we believe in non-violent alternatives to war as a way of life.”

We believe that if we — as families, communities, cities and nations — really believed in reconciliation with justice, then a decrease in arms, military spending and U.S. interfering in the affairs of other countries would give lasting peace a chance to succeed.

During this post-Resurrection time, let us take the example of Jesus the Christ to heart and put our efforts into fostering peace through dialogue, listening and reconciliation.

Sr. Patricia Chappell, SNDdeN
Executive Director, Pax Christi USA
pchappell@paxchristiusa.org