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Occupy Wall Street remains our conscientização

by Joseph Brennan DSW, MDiv

For many, the events of the recent OWS movement are reminiscent of the 1960s and 1970s: the Civil Rights Movement, the Anti-War Movement, and the Women’s Liberation Movement.

Conscious-raising has been with humanity for centuries. Catholics have long been asked to examine their consciences to determine whether they have violated any of the commandments of their religion. Even Communists have been required to engage in self criticism in order to determine if they might have violated any of the precepts of Marxist ideology. Abolitionists challenged American consciences to question the moral response to slavery.

The word “conscience,” whose component parts mean, of course, “knowledge with,” derives from the Latin word, conscientia, which has two senses. It means (as does the present-day French, conscience) both (1) consciousness and (2) conscience as an inward consciousness that something is morally wrong. You will find, for example, Cicero discussing its meaning (De finibus bonorum et malorum, I:xvi). St. Jerome (347-420), Joseph Butler (1692-1752) and the Quakers, like many religious figures, have regarded conscience as somehow manifesting God’s moral guidance.

In Latin America, civic leaders like Camillo Torres, and Paulo Freire, joined with Bishops Oscar Romero, and Helder Camara, along with theologians Edward Schillebeeckx, and Gustavo Gutierrez in

proclaiming a scriptural basis that affirmed individual dignity, self worth, and the right to struggle together for a more decent life. Freire taught the impoverished how to read, and, through education, how to understand that the social order surrounding them was unjust, and a form of social enslavement reinforced by the few who controlled the means of production and political governance.

For many in the United States the existence of social and economic inequalities were issues limited to citizens in other countries, certainly not here. Recent Gallup World Poll Data confirms that economic inequality bears with it the risk of social unrest in most of the one hundred and nineteen countries studied. But that is there, and we are here. A recent study, however, by the Economic Policy Institute revealed that in 1978, the average compensation for US CEOs was 35 times greater than that of average workers. After a brief dip in 2000, it sprinted back in 2010 to 243 times workers’ average compensation.

OWS, if it has done nothing else, has provoked conscious-raising. The theme of the 99%-ers has opened America’s eyes to the fact that the 1% has taken an unjust advantage of their privileged socio-economic position. Current systems maintain their social domination at the cost of the other 99%. The middle class can now be described as an endangered species, while those with even lesser means are driven further into destitution.

Democracy has been bought by capital interest groups who purchase political



The Occupy movement’s vision of radical democracy gives voice to the people.
Photo credit: Eddie Davis

advertisements, political campaigns, and politicians themselves. If corporations are persons, then it is obvious that these persons have more rights than the citizens on the street.

While workers are dismissed, employment rises, jobs are sent overseas, unions are derided, homes are lost to foreclosures, students graduate with unredeemable debts, medicine and other medical costs are prohibitive, public schools are relinquished to private firms, private prison corporations flourish from legislative inequities, politicians are remunerated by the very companies they once condemned, states question financing disaster victims in other regions, fresh food is unattainable in urban localities, thousands die or are maimed in foreign wars, and while some wait for the rapture as an alleviation from their suffering, the injustice in the social system, remains, maintains, and prospers. This is why our country needs its “conscientização.”

Where there is a Yin, however, there is also a Yang. Those who currently benefit from their 243 to 1 income gap are at work plotting to discredit the OWS. They have the financial means to do this. How? Possibly through influencing those in positions of social power; through slandering Occupiers as envious, ignorant, and without clear purpose; through agent provocateurs; through smearing the personal lives of OWS leaders; through denouncing OWS membership as subversive, socialist, anarchist, anti-Christian, and anti-American.

A backlash is inevitable, but OWS conscientização, critical conscious-raising, nevertheless has challenged our nation to rethink many of its fundamental principles.

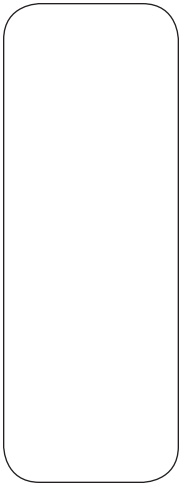
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AN APPEAL

Dear Readers,

We want to partner with you. To help realize a peaceful, just, and reconciling world, we are asking you to work with us in the effort to bring the stories, ideas, information, dreams, values, passions, trials, education, and, perhaps most necessary, the news relevant to positive, effective action to more and more people. We would like for religious patrons, university students, clubs, and all kinds of community organizations to assist us.

Can you make a delivery each of the 10 times per year that FORsooth is published to an organization(s) of your choice?

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Please know that FORsooth’s work doesn’t stop with peacemaking. Our publication engages all topics of interest to progressives, including racism, women’s issues, labor and economic justice, LGBT struggles, ecological crises, and other pressing local, state, national and global issues. Together we can create a much, much better world for the people, flora and fauna of our world!

Drop off of your bundle(s) can begin this June! To help in the cause call John Hartmann at 502-296-1793, email at johart.john@gmail.com, or write to:

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Thank you very much,

John Hartmann

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*In Honor of Jean's Retirement from the FOR Steering Committee,
Please Join Us for a Celebration of Her Tireless Work for Peace and Justice*



Photo by Joan Zehnder

A celebration of
Jean Edwards

Sunday, June 10, 2012 - 1-4 p.m.
Louisville Presbyterian Seminary
Winn Center (across from Caldwell Chapel)

2:00 p.m. Presentation by Jean, "Down Memory Lane"
Please share your own stories about Jean and FOR
Music by John Gage

Your RSVP by Friday May 25th will help us plan for food and beverages

Cathy Ford 502/458-1223 Pat Geier 502/456-6586
fordhoff@bellsouth.net pgeier@fastmail.fm

Please consider a donation for the work of FOR



More than 100 students, faculty and others rallied at UofL on March 26 calling for justice in the Trayvon Martin shooting. This was one of many protests and dialogues across Louisville and the nation over the past few weeks. Martin, an unarmed 17 year-old African American wearing a hoodie, was shot to death on February 26 by George Zimmerman, a self-styled neighborhood watch resident who confronted Martin as he walked back to his father's house from a quick store in Sanford, Florida.

Photo Credit: Stephon Barbour via the Anne Braden Institute FaceBook page.



FOR's Mission Statement

The Fellowship of Reconciliation seeks to replace violence, war, racism and economic injustice with nonviolence, peace and justice. We are an interfaith organization committed to active nonviolence as a transforming way of life and as a means of radical change. We educate, train, build coalitions, and engage in nonviolent and compassionate actions locally, nationally, and globally.

Help Wanted! The Louisville FOR seeks a volunteer with computer skills to manage the mailing labels list for Third Thursday Lunches. Contact FOR Chair Pat Geier pgeier@fastmail.fm.



FORsooth is published by the Louisville chapter of the Fellowship of Reconciliation. Send submissions for news stories or commentaries to Peter Fosl, 1918 Woodbourne Ave., Louisville, KY 40205, e-mail: <pfosl@me.com>. For subscriptions please contact John Hartmann at johart.john@gmail.com, and please indicate whether you prefer an electronic or paper edition. (Electronic subscriptions save us printing costs.)

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95 Years on Peace Frontiers

Since 1915, the Fellowship of Reconciliation in the United States has led campaigns to obtain legal rights for conscientious objectors, win civil rights for all Americans, end the Vietnam War, oppose U.S. intervention in the Third World, and reverse the superpowers' arms race. An interfaith pacifist organization, the FOR has members from many religious and ethnic traditions. It is part of the International Fellowship of Reconciliation, with affiliates in 40 countries.

In the development of its program FOR depends upon persons who seek to apply these principles to every area of life. If you are not already a member, we invite you to join us in this endeavor. Membership consists of signing the Statement of Purpose, indicating that you agree with FOR goals.

Chair: Pat Geier.....609-7985

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Monoculture palm oil empire threatens Honduras

by Stephen Bartlett

The yellow, recycled school bus headed east from the Jesuit Training Center (La Fragua) in Progreso, Honduras, toward the wide and lush expanses of mountain, river and plain. We were on our way to the



Stephen Bartlett

International Human Rights Gathering in Bajo Agua to document and learn about the violations of human rights in this fertile valley in Northern Honduras.

The Bajo Aguan valley remains under control of the extremely wealthy latifundista, who sought to benefit from a 2009 Honduran coup d’etat, usurping power from a democratically-elected government.

Our bus passengers hailed from all over: Nicaragua, El Salvador, Guatemala, Costa Rica, Colombia, Mexico, Italy, and the United States--a diverse group traveling through what is naturally a diverse region.



Participants on their way to the International Human Rights Gathering in Bajo Agua after leaving the Jesuit Training Center in Progreso. Photo credit: Stephon Barbour

But despite the well-watered green of the landscape, that ecological diversity was obviously in grave peril.

For approximately five hours, we traveled through a coastal plain and foot hills planted in a deceptively beautiful monoculture of African Palm. Row after row flickered by--so straight they could have been planned by a 3rd Reich technocrat.

Those of us living in the U.S. have probably heard something about our nation’s growing appetite for biofuels; more and more of our maize/corn crop is being

turned into the gasoline substitute, ethanol. Few Americans know that these crops are converted at subsidized and arguably break-even energy levels, or even at an overall loss of energy.

You’re even less likely to have heard about Brazil’s endless stretch of sugarcane fields that are being converted to ethanol production more directly and efficiently than corn, and on a large scale.

Yet only very recently have people of the Global North begun to be aware of a new monoculture that is quickly subjugating the fertile, humid tropics--African Palm.

Once used exclusively for making soap and wax products, the African Palm has become a new economic engine for corporations and governments seeking carbon credits. Its extensive, systematic planting reinforces the old “plantation” mentality of planting large expanses of monoculture.

The planting of this “forest” mono-crop has multiplied worldwide, despite the bitter protests of social movements that question the ethical viability of biofuels” or “agrofuels.” “No full tanks with empty stomachs,” is a cry that often resonates from these groups.

Indeed, there is a wholesale conversion of lands taking place in Honduras, as mixed forest and pasture, small-scale family farms producing grains, fruits, and meat along with some cash crops, and previous forestlands and preserves become African Palm plantations. It is a dangerous phenomenon, one that is eliminating the most fertile lands from the production of food, wood, medicines and fiber.

If this current agro-movement was a project instigated by cooperatives of small-scale farmers, it would be another ball of wax, for even the most ambitious small-scale farmers would not plant all of their lands in African Palm for one obvious reason: people cannot eat it. It’s no good for firewood or wood for construction either.

Even with the historic “company store,” U.S. Embassy-supported monocultures of bananas, pineapples and cattle produced by landed elites or U.S. corporations like Dole, at least you can say that the product is edible, though not obviously produced on a scale that would provide a balanced diet.

African Palm oil, on the other hand, has no place within a diet. It is an industrial product, pure and simple, and has nothing to do with food.

In Bajo Aguan we learned that the landed elites who have attempted to take

over formerly public lands eligible for agrarian reform measures, are now hell bent on the production of one crop and one crop alone: African Palm. The Honduran government cooperates with this plan, and even benefits by the international awarding of “carbon credits” for these African Palm “forests” under the pretext that they are helping humanity avoid fossil fuel burning and are “fixing carbon” in their biomass.

Carbon credits are themselves a highly controversial proposal rejected outright by social movements as a mere mechanism for

are being knocked down by those peasants eager to grow food for themselves, their families and their communities. Common sense and decency would seem to ask all of us to do what we could to denounce this devastating model of production.

As my Mapuche indigenous friend from what is today called Chile always reminds me: “there is no good monoculture.” Monoculture goes against the laws and harmony of nature, which seeks always to have the greatest degree of diversity for its health. In Honduras, the practice is not only devastat-



Corporate African Palm Oil Refinery in Zona Guaymon, Honduras, where security forces are alleged to have committed violent acts of repression in the past in coordination with plantation security forces. Photo credit Stephon Barbour.

turning all of nature into a commodity and allowing polluters mostly in the Global North to continue to emit massive amounts of CO2 by simply financing what turns out to be a new corporate-elite-style gravy train of biofuel/ agrofuel or wood pulp crop monocultures.

Civil society, from massive convergences at COP negotiations in Copenhagen, Cancun and Durban and this coming June in Rio, rejects this mechanism as one that allows corporations to co-opt the environmental movement, calling it a form of “green” capitalism that is the color of dollars more than anything.

The land settlements in Bajo Aguan are bringing hope to the land poor or landless underclass of Honduras. They are bringing economic livelihood and development to the most marginalized people of Central America.

It is no wonder that African Palm trees

ing to the land, but monoculture is being produced by people willing to overthrow governments and assassinate family farmers to expand their already enormous land holdings and profits.

Once again we have to ask ourselves whether the industrialization of agriculture has not been among the most dangerous inventions by some humans at the expense of all of humanity and Mother Earth.

Stephen Bartlett farmed for several years in the Dominican Republic, and has worked 11 years for Agricultural Missions, Inc (AMI). He is a linguist and polyglot who often works as an interpreter for social movement speakers. Bartlett lives in Crescent Hill with his wife, Ada, and has three wonderful children, the youngest a junior in Atherton high school. sbartlett@ag-missions.org.



Honduras. Photo credit: Stephon Barbour



National Popular Vote Compact would improve our democracy

By Richard Beliles

Rep. Ruth Ann Palumbo of Lexington sponsored a bill in the Kentucky House of Representatives this year that would enter Kentucky into the National Popular Vote Compact. It was House Bill 141. One of her co-sponsors is Rep. Joni Jenkins of Metro Louisville. This is an idea whose time has come.

House Bill 141 did not make it to the floor of the Kentucky House this time, but Palumbo promises to re-introduce it to the 2013 session. I would urge you to follow the progress of the next bill at the Kentucky General Assembly website. Look for it to be pre-filed later this year.

The basic concept here is pretty simple. States who join this compact agree to cast all of their electoral votes for whichever candidate wins the presidential popular vote in the nation as a whole. In so doing, they ratify the people's choice and prevent the peculiar calculus of the Electoral College from overriding that choice.

So far, eight states have joined the compact and another twelve have legislation in process. All the compact needs is enough states to cover the majority of the votes in the Electoral College.

Many of the traditionalists still believe we need the Electoral College because "The Framers wanted rule by certain kind of majorities ... suited to moderate, consensual

governance, of a heterogeneous, continental nation with myriad and other diversities."

Those are the words of columnist George Will. It sounds nice, but does anyone really believe the Electoral College is well suited to the social media of the 21st Century?

Nowadays, our citizens reach consensus based on common interests and identities spread across a modern nation of over 300 million. These commonalities include political philosophies, business, occupations, economic potential, and cultural heritage.

The traditionalists want us to group our commonalities by geographic location because that is what the Framers did during the years of the "peculiar institution" of slavery from 1789 to 1860.

Note that our Framers also allowed the slave states to count three-fifths of "other persons" (people held in slavery) towards their representation in Congress and provided for the election of our U.S. Senators by the state legislatures. We changed those provisions with the 13th, 14th, 15th and 17th Amendments.

The Framers purposefully simplified the electorate by allowing the exclusion of African Americans, Native Americans, women, and those who did not own considerable property. On top of that, they added a voting system designed for the politics of the slavery era which they named



Richard Beliles of Common Cause KY

the Electoral College.

Today, we have a diverse electoral population that includes all kinds of people. Adding an 18th-century algorithm on top of this complexity defeats the purpose of representative government as we understand it in our modern times.

Some folks believe we ought to

continue that 18th Century system anyway because it supposedly benefits the small states like Kentucky. They apparently fear that the so-called liberal impulses of coastal states, like California and New York, would have too great an effect on our public policies if we allowed direct election of our President. We need the Electoral College to balance those impulses, they say.

That line of reasoning overlooks the makeup of our U.S. Senate, where small states have equal representation with the large states. They have apparently forgotten that the U.S. Senate approves nominations to the federal courts. They have also forgotten that U.S. Senate rules allow that body to stop legislation by filibuster. So, it would appear that small states, like Kentucky, have plenty of power by other constitutional provisions.

As for the election of our US President, we need an expression of the national will. Direct election would seem to be the best way to accomplish that. It might even inspire our citizens with the confidence that their votes actually matter.

Richard Beliles is a lawyer and state chair of Common Cause of Kentucky and was former assistant to a mayor of Louisville and on the board of the Kentucky Registry of Election finance and is a former vice president of League of Women Voters of Louisville, Kentucky.

Free speech requires challenging money, lobbies

By Michael J. Copps

The challenge we face today is to guarantee Freedom of Speech and Expression which, translated into twenty-first century American terms, means that no citizen should be denied the news and information he or she needs to participate responsibly in our democracy any place in the land.

Freedom of Speech and Expression is inextricably linked with Freedom of the Press, with an uninhibited, competitive and vibrant marketplace of ideas, and with the absence of consolidated control in that marketplace.

That is what the First Amendment and the first of Franklin D. Roosevelt's Four Freedoms are all about. These have been the premise of our system of self-government since the beginning. A shining goal—but never fully achieved and every day threatened.

In our own generation, in our own country, these Freedoms have been pushed back by special interests that have ravaged the diversity of local journalism and left in their path of destruction a diminished and too often dumbed-down civic dialogue.

Freedom of Speech and Expression suffers from the excesses of financial speculators who are more interested in the



Michael J. Copps

bottom line on the quarterly report than in quality news on the front page or the evening news. Freedom of Speech and Expression is further impaired by a federal government absent without leave for more than 30 years from its responsibility to protect the public interest.

Instead, government—and I speak specifically of the Federal Communications Commission where I work—has abetted the decline of our small "d" democratic dialogue by, for example, failing to insist that the people's airwaves serve the people's interest.

Building news and information infrastructure that digs more deeply, gathers facts before shouting opinions, and affords expression to the many voices of this nation's wondrous diversity may be our greatest calling now. Our country confronts challenges to its viability in some ways reminiscent of the 1930s, making it a national imperative that every American be empowered with the news and information essential for knowledgeable decision-making.

Without that, the challenges go misunderstood, untended, unresolved.

When our media, our press and our journalism catch cold, democracy catches pneumonia. Dr. New Deal prescribed strong cures for the challenges of his time; now we need the restorative medicine of reform in ours. Now, as then, powerful forces combine against needed reform.

We can cower before their money and their lobbies in unreasoning, unjustified fear—or, in true Rooseveltian fashion, we can

take them on, relish the battle, mobilize the American people, and do democracy's work.

Time and again, We the People have come together to renew our Freedoms. Citizen action can still work, even in this era when so few wield so much outrageous influence. Organized citizen action is how America overcomes.

Generations of reformers proved it—abolitionists, civil rights crusaders, women's rights champions, consumer advocates, disabilities activists, labor unions, media rights defenders—committing to a cause, challenging powers grown too strong, making a difference and moving America forward. Franklin Roosevelt achieved his victories because such groups were there, helping him, sometimes even prodding him, and together they redeemed the promise of America.

Now Freedom of Speech and Expression summons us to action again. Seek no further for this generation of Americans' rendezvous with destiny.

From the remarks of outgoing FCC Commissioner Michael J. Copps on receiving the Four Freedoms Award of The Roosevelt Institute September 17, 2011



State Representative Jim Wayne (D-35th District) and the Fairness Campaign's Chris Hartman demonstrating with Catholics for Fairness for HB 188, to ban discrimination based on sexual orientation, on February 19 in downtown Louisville. Photo credit: Eddie Davis.

Finding Common Ground:

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Kentucky Interfaith Power and Light's Annual Awards Dinner with author/activist **Andrea Cohen-Kiener**

Thursday, May 17 6:30 pm at First Unitarian Church Louisville

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Progressives wrong to cheer NATO intervention in Libya

By Thomas Edward Pearce

Somehow with Obama at the helm, a sudden coup d'etat in Libya is met with ambivalence amongst progressives and in many cases with cheers. Now even though *The Guardian* has reported that the majority of Syrians (55%) do not support the fall of the government. Some facts, mean nothing, somehow history is forgotten. These are some of the headlines out of the so-called revolution:

“Libyan rebels round up black Africans.”
“The Fall of Tripoli brings new era for oil & gas companies in Libya.”
“Libyan rebels abused civilians: Human Rights Watch.”

What are you celebrating? U.S. and NATO takeover of the only oil fields in the world ever used to transform a very poor nation into a place where citizens had free education, healthcare, and shared in the profits of their resources? To be sure the Libyan revolution was beginning to falter under the harsh demands of the Bush administration that Colonel Gaddafi had agreed to in order to avoid an Iraq-like U.S. invasion, including restoring relations with the IMF and the World Bank. These measures ensured that the Libyan economy would be dealt a heavy blow.

I am not making the argument that Gaddafi's government was a perfect system for the people. I am not arguing that Libyans enjoyed American styled freedom. I am arguing that compared to other Middle Eastern and North African leaders propped up by the U.S.A. he was a saint.

Egypt, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Tunisia, and others never received an ultimatum by the U.S. government, nor when the Arab Spring erupted did rebels receive offers of military help from NATO. Why? It was our government's hope that these nation's leaders would cling to power; the Libyan Jamahiriya, or “Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya” stood as proof that in 1969 the poorest nation in Africa could pump its own oil and in fact could be the richest nation in Africa, enjoying the highest per capita wealth on the continent.

This was not at all because of the Arab Spring. In fact we know from intercepted Wikileaks cables that Condoleezza Rice com-



Thomas Edward Pearce

municated after a trip to Libya in 2008, almost 4 years ago: “Oil companies aren't likely to wait long to take advantage of the power vacuum and make deals with the rebels.”

This, as all military excursions by imperialists are, was nothing more than a bank robbery in the form of oil. This was a sad day for Africa and for all revolutionary people in the world. In 1988 Vernon Bellecourt--the American Indian Movement (AIM) Grand Governing Council leader as well as the dear friend and warrior I was proud to call Uncle--spent 18 months in federal prison for refusing to testify to a federal grand jury concerning a trip he took to Libya--a trip during which the indigenous resistance movement of Mohawk Warriors at Oka was given the Gaddafi International Human Rights Award of one million dollars, a trip during which Indigenous students from the Western Hemisphere announced that they would receive a free education from the Libyan government because the US government provided little opportunities for indigenous youth to be educated. This was a very embarrassing moment for the U.S. government and the CIA.

Vernon told us of his trip and the assis-

tance the Libyan people provided to various struggles around the world. He spoke highly of the Libyan people and Gaddafi. He spoke to us of many things most Americans never think of when they think of Gaddafi. The many attempts on the Colonel's life, the bombing by Reagan that killed his daughter Hannah, and the fact that from 1969-2007 the U.S. government had been determined to destroy the Libyan Jamahiriya.

This for one simple reason: American oil companies demanded to be allowed to resume their rape of the Libyan oil fields. The U.S. was also determined to stop Gaddafi's support of anti-imperialist movements around the world.

Today Hugo Chavez is the new Colonel Gaddafi. Make no mistake that corporate America will not rest until the Venezuelan revolution is reversed and American oil companies resume their rape of Venezuela.

Do any American progressives ask, “Why did the South Africans condemn the sacking of Gaddafi?” Do you want to hear the answer? The Libyan government provided assistance to South African freedom fighters until the fall of the Apartheid regime. Mandela was a good friend. Gaddafi provided \$40 million a year to the African Union's budget, 15% of it. Indeed, Libya's money secured for the African Union the only autonomy it has enjoyed. Gaddafi was thought of highly throughout Africa. It is important to recognize that at the time that the first air strikes hit Libya, South Africa had a peace envoy on the way to Tripoli to try to resolve the crisis through an African solution. NATO, however, would hear none of it. Big oil had already signed new deals with the “rebels.”

So yes, Gaddafi was eccentric, yes he was a heavy handed at times (most men who are the targets of constant assassination attempts are!), but the question I will demand that peace loving Americans, anti-war Americans, and human rights advocates ask yourselves is this: In a list of dictators in this world, would Gaddafi have been at the top?

Think about the fact that 2 million people have died in the Democratic Republic of Congo in the last few years to get precious metals for your cell phones. Yet, the horrific violence there was never warranted NATO

intervention. Sudan? Thousands have been put to death in the Sudan; slavery is a part of daily life.

What sets Libya apart from the ignominious pack? A nation with a population slightly larger than Kentucky needed to be bombed and bombed immediately? I do not think so. The intervention was about a large oil field not exploited for the profit of corporations.

The Libyan National Transitional Government has been confirmed to be a band of mercenaries supplied with CIA backing from the start. So the question becomes: Do American progressives cheer gunboat diplomacy? Will you cheer when Chavez and Morales are painted as dictators as well? I will not. If we are to get rid of dictators, we should start with the corporate board rooms of American and multinational corporations. They seem to be the most dangerous terrorists of all.

Now in Syria the CIA, the British MI6, and French intelligence have effectively armed mercenaries to destabilize the Syrian government. The Assad government once again is not a great bastion of freedom; but in the grand scale of the Middle East it does stand as a counterbalance to Israeli domination of the region, and it is obvious the Israelis are poised to see Turkey step in as a proxy for U.S. and Israeli interests there. Mercenaries who fought in Libya are being paid \$1000 a month to fight in Syria, weapons are being smuggled in from Turkey along with fighters.

So, where do you stand? Jonathon Steele of *The Guardian* reported January 17th that a poll funded by anti-Syrian Qatar found that 55% of Syrian people do not support the violent mercenaries fighting in their country and want Assad to stay in power. Don't believe the hype. U.S. intervention in the Middle East is not and never has been in the best interest of the people. It is about power and control.

Thomas Pearce is a representative of the American Indian Movement (AIM) and has worked in the past with the Kentucky Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression as well as Citizens Against Police Abuse. Contact him on Facebook or at bianrky@gmail.com.

“Journey into Compassion” advances study series

By Joe Proctor

Fifty-four years ago, on March 18, Trappist monk Thomas Merton was at 4th and Walnut Sts. (now 4th and Muhammad Ali Blvd.) in the heart of downtown Louisville when he was struck with a moment of compassion. Out of nowhere Merton envisioned a world where all humans were connected, where people of good will the world over were holding hands in love and sharing a connection with each other. “We are already one,” Merton wrote,



Joe Proctor

“but we imagine we are not. What we have to recover is our original unity.”

Seizing on Merton's theme, the Division of Peace and Justice of the Episcopal Diocese of Kentucky spearheaded a weekend retreat January 20-21 at All Saints Conference Center near Leitchfield, KY to develop strategies leading to the compassionate life.

Designated “Journey Into Compassion,” the agenda called for creating a study series for all congregations and groups interested in participating. Thirty persons from several faith communities spent the weekend working on the project.

Mary Abrams, Episcopal Division Director of Peace and Justice, and Rhody Streeter, co-facilitator of the workshop, said the compassion study consists of a six-part study series requiring two facilitators with materials that are being formulated by the group. Abrams and Streeter said their vision is that the teams will return to their congregations prepared to facilitate the six-part series that was developed at the workshop.

Appearing as guest speakers were Joe Grant of JustFaith Ministries and Terry Taylor of Interfaith Paths to Peace. Grant gave a compelling account of what compassion means in his spiritual journey, and Taylor told the group that all the world's great religions revere compassion as a practicing mantra in their respective faiths.

Some of the themes include: (1) Staying Open to Receive God's Desires, (2) Wait with Me, (3) Serving Hands, (4) Compassionate Life is a Life Together, (5) God's Time, and (6) Walking with God. A sampling of the activities include a definition of compassion, understanding community, how we spend our time, taking a critical



Presenters Rhody Streeter and Mary Abrams discussed compassion techniques at the Compassion Workshop.

look at ourselves, being a servant, visiting a homeless shelter and attending a religious service outside your own tradition.

The primary tool for the course is Compassion, A Reflection on the Christian Life by Henri J.M. Nouwen and two other writers. After years of study with each other and with other religions, the authors look at compassion with a new perspective. Books will be provided for participants at a nominal cost.

Also in attendance was Thomas M. Williams, a Louisville attorney who has taken a leadership role in naming the city of Louisville as a Compassionate City with a 10-year campaign. The mission of the

Partnership for a Compassionate Louisville is to champion and support Louisville becoming a model compassionate city as designated by the International Campaign for Compassionate Cities.

Persons wanting more information about Journey Into Compassion should contact Mary Abrams at meabrms@bellsouth.net or Rhody Streeter at rhodenstreeter@mac.com.

Recently retired from the Red Cross, Joe Proctor has been involved with FOR activities for years. He can be reached at Procpro40205@gmail.com.

TTL report: the only atomic bombers, us (the U.S.)

By Ike Thacker

The University of Louisville (U of L) is lucky to have its Peace, Justice & Conflict Transformation program director, who is also a full professor in the theater department and who spoke at the FOR's Third Thursday Lunch (TTL) on February 16. Dr. Russell Vandembroucke is an accomplished playwright (some of his works are *Eleanor*, *School Play*, and *Atomic Bombers*, on the



Ike Thacker

last of which more later) and has studied and taught peace in Thailand (2007) and critical thinking in Vietnam (2011). Vandembroucke brilliantly proved his unflinching, unfettered demand for the related, critical goals of peace and justice in his presentation at the TTL.

Perhaps, though, the most important thing Vandembroucke did at that TTL, which was far from short on important ideas, wasn't even verbally presented (the "speeches" included, in addition to Vandembroucke, U of L Theater students performing scenes from "Atomic Bombers"), but rather handed

out in the form of a very impressively long list of peace-and-justice-related programs at U of L, from the Anne Braden Institute for Social Justice Research, the Center for the Study of Crime and Justice in Black Communities, and the Grawemeyer Awards to the Muhammad Ali Institute for Peace and Justice, the Ombuds Office, and his own Peace Studies program—to enumerate just a few.

U of L really is in very many ways a fundamentally different kind of university, just as Louisville, which Terry Taylor reported at the TTL has been named the model Compassionate City for the planet for 2012, is a fundamentally different kind of city!

But back to Dr. Vandembroucke. This dedicated peace scholar reported in his after-lunch TTL presentation that he had signed up for military service in 1968 and actually reported to Fort Benning; but he immediately and irrevocably became a conscientious objector upon learning that the U.S. willfully ignored international law and reserved the right to use chemical and biological weapons—not even mendaciously signing the relevant treaties and protocols.

Upon returning to Louisville from Thailand in 2007, Dr. Vandembroucke, with others at U of L, began the process which has resulted in the Peace, Justice & Conflict Transformation program, which had a kind of kickoff last September on the U.N.'s international peace day, and in which a concentration is already possible with a certificate to follow in school year 2012-13. Throughout his elucidation of this formative process, and throughout his talk, Vandembroucke emphasized that peace and justice are intimately related—in fact, justice is essential to peace, as is conflict transformation.

Another inextricable intertwining in Vandembroucke's view is that between the political and the personal. This was well demonstrated both in the scenes from *Atomic Bombers* performed at the TTL, and in the



Prof. Russ Vandembroucke

play as a whole, which was performed from February 29 through March 4 at U of L's Thrust Theater. "Atomic Bombers," which I saw on its final day, is in large part made up of personal-yet-political reminiscences by one of the scientists who developed the atomic bomb, John Feynman, who dealt with that work, and the fatal illness of his wife, at the same time. The play's touching, pointed focuses—personal and political—synergistically reinforce each other.

As for the Peace, Justice & Conflict Transformation program, Dr. Vandembroucke presented it as a sort of triangle with the core courses at the bottom: P J & CT Fundamentals, Mediation, and Service Learning being three of them.

The segue from this and the exposé of what Vandembroucke through Feynman in "Atomic Bombers" called the "social irresponsibility" of the atomic-bomber scientists—only one of them, Szilard, warned in 1944-45 of the impending arms race and the deleterious long-term effects of having "the bomb"—to what happened

in August 1945 at Hiroshima and then at Nagasaki, was a smooth one. Vandembroucke visited Hiroshima in March 2011 on his way to Vietnam; perhaps this experience created and/or infused the passion against the bomb which he obviously feels.

We did not drop leaflets to warn people of the atomic bombs to follow, he noted; and the cost in human lives of invading Japan, according to a document prepared by our own government, would likely have been only 46,000 deaths. Truman in his memoirs, according to Vandembroucke, originally said 250,000 including the wounded—but this "somehow" became 500,000 deaths before publication and was wildly inflated to 1 million by later presidents. No wonder, as Vandembroucke points out, we called our War Department the War Department until 1947!

But the most thoroughly damaging piece of evidence presented by Dr. Vandembroucke is that intercepted diplomatic cables indicate that Japan was willing to sue for peace in July 1945—before Hiroshima—with only one condition, that they keep their emperor. THINK OF WHAT THAT MEANS: the only "atomic bombers" that have ever been (us, the U.S.) absolutely did not have to be!! The world had good reason to fear when the U.S. for much of the 1950s under John Foster Dulles threatened to respond with "the nuclear option" to virtually any meaningful attack. These are such devastating, damning thoughts that I can only quote again the great German socialist artist, Kathe Kollwitz: Nie wieder Krieg (Never again war), which makes people think in such insane, incendiary ways.

Thank you, Dr. Vandembroucke!

Ike Thacker is an advocate for political, social, and economic democracy. He focuses especially on housing issues, believing simply that housing is a human right and that everyone deserves a place to call home.

Megachurchgoers entertained but unchallenged

By Rev. Polk Culpepper

It began promptly after a three-minute countdown on two of the three giant video screens perched over the stage. A person sitting at a master console flipped some switches to dim the overhead lights in the seating section of the auditorium, brightening the lights to illuminate the stage. This was the cue for five musicians to walk onto the platform and take their places behind stationary microphones, guitars in hand, except for the drummer who sat behind a partially enclosed clear plastic container. Camera operators with shoulder-mounted portable video devices scurried to take their places behind and to one side of the band.

I was snug in my comfortable, cushioned chair. Besides the empty cup-holder, it was a perfect lead-up to a great rock concert. Except that I wasn't there to wave my lighter and listen to sweet guitar riffs over a Bud light.

Just then, the lead singer requested that the congregation stand to praise the Lord. The auditorium filled with upbeat music. The congregation stood. The church service had officially begun.

At the end of the second song, members of the congregation were invited to turn to their right and left and welcome other attendees, the only attempt during the service at personal interaction. Following the third musical offering, the congregation partook of the Holy Communion. We passed around a few trays stacked with individual pellets of something almost like bread, and thimble-sized plastic cups of grape juice. These we took while seated.

The band departed stage right behind a purple curtain and a junior pastor entered stage left to inform the congregation of upcoming events.

Then it was time for the main event: the Senior Pastor's Message, which lasted 45 minutes of the 75-minute service. The band then reappeared and sang two more songs. The Pastor dismissed us with a blessing and the congregation filed out of the auditorium.

Impressions of an Admittedly Liturgically-Oriented Christian

As a cradle Episcopalian, I am, of course, biased toward traditional liturgical services. That said, my visit to a megachurch nevertheless reminded me of concerts I had attended as a student at LSU—with one exception: in college the liquids we consumed during "communion" were much stronger than grape juice.

On the other hand, the similarities were striking: the darkened "audience" section, the screens, the seats, the band, the cameras, and the swift departure. It was all decidedly reminiscent of rock concerts of college days past.

In addition, the setting, the lighting, the accommodations, the music and the delivery and content of the Senior Pastor's message

were all designed to avoid the infliction of any discomfort or uneasiness on the part of the congregation. The setting was as comfortable as the best concert halls and movie theaters—the lighting and video and audio equipment first-rate, and the main event—the sermon—unchallenging.

All in all, it was an easy fit for any red-blooded American consumer looking for a religious experience that was without real demands and that wasn't in conflict with his/her values. Exhibit A for the current incarnation of American Christianity: Don't worry. We won't do or say anything to offend you, and we surely don't want to tire you by asking you to think about what you have seen or heard.

Yes, I am being judgmental, but I hope in a prophetic way. The same harsh lens through which I see the typical megachurch could also

be used to evaluate the parishes of traditional liturgical churches as well. To what extent have they, too, allowed themselves to be co-opted by the culture's demand for endless entertainment and religious affiliation without demands or challenges?

How many parishes have the courage to stay true to their liturgical traditions and identities and follow Jesus in his solidarity with the poor, oppressed and outcast regardless of what that might mean to membership and financial statistics? To what extent are our decisions about how to worship and what we do in the world being driven by the desire to fit-in?

The Rev. Polk Culpepper is an Episcopal priest currently serving Christ Church in Madison, IN. plok@insightbb.com



Visitors from the FOR national join the Louisville FOR Steering Committee for a special dinner meeting on March 26.

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Calendar for peacemakers

THE INGREDIENTS OF PEACEMAKING include Non-Violent Communication, Human Rights, Solidarity, Self-Determination, Participatory Governance, Elimination of Poverty, and Environmental Stewardship. This calendar presents examples we hope you find inspiring

- May 1 (Tues) **INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM WORKSHOP**. Every Tuesday, 11AM to 1PM. The Council on Developmental Disabilities. An IEP is the cornerstone of a quality education for a child with a disability. Learn how to address barriers to inclusion. Call 584-1239
- May 2 (Wed) **THE LOUISVILLE SUSTAINABILITY FORUM**. Every first Wednesday. Sustainability and relationships that create a community for change. Bring your lunch. Noon to 1:45 PM, Passionist Earth & Spirit Center, the Barn at 1924 Newburg Road.
- May 2 (Wed) **NOONTIME INTERFAITH MEDITATIONS**. Every Wednesday from 12:30 to 12:50 at Christ Church Cathedral, Downtown. Weekly rotation includes Zen Buddhist silence, Lecto Divina, Vipassana Buddhist practices, and Creative Visualization. Visit <http://paths2peace.org>
- May 2 (Wed) **NATURE PRESERVE VOLUNTEERS**. Blackacre State Nature Preserve and Historic Homestead. Every Wednesday, 9AM to Noon. Help care for gardens, trails, and farmland. Visit www.blackacreconservancy.org
- May 2 (Wed) **CITIZENSHIP TUTORS**. Kentucky Refugee Ministries, 6:30 to 8:30PM. Every Wednesday. Also every Thursday, 11AM to 1PM. Help students study for the citizenship exam. Ask about our other volunteer opportunities. Call 479-9180 Ext 57 for more information.
- May 5 (Sat) **SATURDAY ACADEMY**. Every Saturday. African American history, culture, and current issues. Free. Call the UofL College of Arts and Sciences at 852-2658 for more information.
- May 5 (Sat) **ENGLISH CONVERSATION CLUB**. Every Saturday at the Iroquois Branch Public Libraries, 3PM. Also Main Library on Thursdays at 7PM. Practice conversational English with neighbors and friends from many parts of the world. Visit www.lfpl.org
- May 5 (Sat) **SACK LUNCHES FOR HOMELESS**. Every Saturday, 12pm to 2PM, Bates Community Development Corporation, 1228 S. Jackson Street. Call 636-0573 for more information.
- May 5 (Sat) **CLIMATE IMPACTS DAY**. 350 Louisville is raising our climate awareness on Derby Day. Visit www.350.org
- May 5 (Sat) **LOUISVILLE COMMUNITY AGRICULTURE**. Every Saturday morning. Also, other days and times. 26 farmers’ markets from California neighborhood to Norton Commons. Visit www.louisvilleky.gov/HealthyHometown
- May 5 (Sat) **LAND STEWARD PROJECT**. Jefferson Memorial Forest. Every first Saturday, 9AM to Noon. Also, Wednesdays. Help improve landscape and protect native flora. Gloves, tools, water and on-the-job training provided. Visit www.louisvilleky.gov/metroparks/jeffersonmemorialforest/
- May 6 (Sun) **“AIM HIGHER”** focusing on military counter-recruitment. Every first Sunday at 7 PM, 2236 Kaelin Avenue at the FOR office. Discuss conscientious objection, military recruitment, and the possibility for high school students to “opt out” of having their names given to recruiters. Call Jim Johnson, 262-0148.
- May 7 (Mon) **BICYCLES FOR HEALTH AND CLEANER AIR** Louisville Bicycle Club, Every Monday, weather permitting. Fat Forty at 8:45AM. Recovery Ride at 6:45PM. Visit www.louisvilleky.gov/bikelouisville.
- May 7 (Mon) **KFTC ARMCHAIR SEMINAR**. Kentuckians For The Commonwealth, 7:30PM to 9PM. Join KFTC members across the state over the phone and online to improve grassroots organizing skills. Visit www.kftc.org
- May 7 (Mon) **DEADLINE FOR THE JUNE ISSUE OF FOR-sooth**. Every second Monday. Contact Peter Fosl, editor, at 291-2506 or pfsol@me.com. Please email new or updated calendar listings to calendar.peace@gmail.com.
- May 8 (Tues) **GREEN CONVENE**. Every second Tuesday at The Highland Green Building, 6:30PM. Join residents and policy-makers in examining ways to connect the health of our community with our environment. Visit www.greenconvene.org
- May 8 (Tues) **FREE HOME ENERGY EFFICIENCY SEMINAR**. Energy Pros Sustainable Home Education Group, 6:30PM to 8:30PM. Learn the basics. Visit www.theenergypros.net
- May 9 (Wed) **KENTUCKY INTERFAITH TASKFORCE ON LATIN AMERICAN AND THE CARIBBEAN (KITLAC)**. Every second Wednesday at the 1741 Building on Frankfort Avenue. 7:30 PM. For more information, call David Horvath at 479-9262 or Pat Geier at 456-6586.
- May 10 (Thurs) **AMERICAN PALESTINE PUBLIC AFFAIRS FORUM (APPAPF)**. Every second Thursday. A documentary film exploring the situation in Middle East will be presented. 7 PM, Louisville Presbyterian Seminary, Nelson Hall, Room 119. For more information, call Bashar Masri, 773-1836.
- May 10 (Thurs) **REAL PEOPLE, REAL CHALLENGES, REAL SOLUTIONS**. Volunteers of America Family Emergency Shelter, 8:30AM to 9:30AM. Also, May 23, 6 to 7 PM. One hour interactive tour of VOA’s methods and programs for self-determination. For more information, call 636-4660.
- May 10 (Thurs) **CULTURAL EXCHANGES**. Friendship Force of Louisville. 2nd Thursday on odd numbered months, 6:30PM to 8:30PM. Commonwealth Bank & Trust, 286 N. Hubbards Lane. Help plan and participate in homestay exchanges with chapters in other countries. For more information, contact fflk@insightbb.com
- May 12 (Sat) **PEAK OIL**. Every 2nd Saturday, Main Library, 4th & York, Mezzanine, Boardroom. 9 AM. Call George Perkins, 425-6645.
- May 12 (Sat) **EARTH DAY AT THE FALLS**. Falls of the Ohio State Park. Green technology. Educational exhibits. Live animals. Jazz performances. Sponsored by KAIRE and others. Call 574-600 for more information.
- May 12 (Sat) **OLMSTEAD PARK VOLUNTEERS**. 9AM to 12PM, at Iroquois Park. Also, April 21. Help maintain and restore Louisville’s urban forests. Visit www.olmsteadparks.org
- May 12 (Sat) **DANCE WITH YOUR LATINO NEIGHBORS**. Iroquois Branch Library, 1PM. Also, May 19th & 26th. Practice Zumba Latin Dance with enthusiastic new neighbors. Visit www.lfpl.org

- May 12 (Sat) **BLINDNESS 101**. American Printing House for the Blind, 10:30AM to 12:30PM. Free. Frank discussion about blindness and how best to help. Call 899-2212 to register.
- May 13 (Sun) **VETERANS FOR PEACE**. Every second Sunday, 3PM to 4PM. Heine Bros. Coffee at the Douglas Loop, Call 632-2177 for more information.
- May 13 (Sun) **VIGIL FOR PEACE**. Every second Sunday. A remembrance of all those suffering from conflicts in the Middle East. Bring a sign. 5PM to 6 PM, Bardstown Road at Douglass Blvd. Sponsored by LPAC (Louisville Peace Action Community). For more information, call Harold Trainer at 387-9490.
- May 14 (Mon) **URBAN LEAGUE YOUNG PROFESSIONALS**. Louisville Urban League, Every 2nd Monday, 6PM. Networking opportunities for emerging leaders ages 21 to 40 of all minority backgrounds. Call the Urban League office for more info: 561-6830.
- May 15 (Tues) **GROWING FOOD AND COMMUNITY**. 15 Thousand Farmers, at Dismas St. Ann’s on Algonquin Pkwy, the 15th day each month. Share ideas and experiences about growing your own food. Taste samples. Visit www.15thousandfarmers.com
- May 15 (Tues) **ESSAY CONTEST ON GLOBAL OBLIGATIONS**. UofL, The McConnell Center. High school Students are invited to submit essays by May 15th on obligations of the United States to the other nations of the world. For more information, call 852-8811.
- May 16 (Wed) **MAKE A DIFFERENCE**. Hand in Hand Ministries, 6:30PM. Informal one-hour introduction to our immersion trips and volunteer opportunities. Visit www.hhministries.com
- May 17 (Thurs) **KENTUCKY SINGLE PAYER HEALTH CARE**. Every third Thursday, 5:30 PM. First Unitarian Church, 809 South Fourth Street. Call Kay Tillow, 636-1551.
- May 17 (Thurs) **ANNUAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES**. Calvin Presbyterian Church. 5:30PM to 7PM. Dinner provided. Celebrating the Council’s 60th anniversary. “Value and empower all people with developmental disabilities.” Call 584-1239 for more information.
- May 17 (Thurs) **MENTAL ILLNESS SUPPORT AND ADVOCACY**. NAMI Louisville every third Thursday at 3PM. Also Saturdays and Sundays. Support group for families. Draw on years of experience. Visit www.namilouisville.org.lfpl.org
- May 17 (Thurs) **FAITH, CLIMATE CHANGE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE**. Kentucky Interfaith Power and Light Annual Awards Dinner. Guest speaker Andrea Cohen-Kiener author of “Claiming Earth’s Common Ground: The Ecological Crises Through the Lens of Faith.” Visit www.kentuckyipl.org
- May 17 (Thurs) **MOSAIC AWARDS**, Jewish Family and Career Services at The Henry Clay Hotel, 5Pm to 8:30PM. Honoring immigrants and refugees who are making significant contributions to our community: Israel “Izzy” Benitos, Cedric Francois, Dr. Mohammad Hussain, Rishabh & Lopa Mehrotra and Thomson Smillie. Visit www.jfclsloisville.org
- May 18 & 19 **MEDITATION RETREAT WITH RICHARD SISTO**. 7 PM TO 9PM Friday and 9AM to 4:30PM. Interfaith Paths to Peace at Thomas Jefferson Unitarian Church. Method, Practice, Realization. Reality Check. Visit <http://paths2peace.org>
- May 18 (Fri) **DAUGHTER OF GREATNESS**. Muhammad Ali Center at 8:30PM. Guest Speaker: Ambassador at Large Attallah Shabazz, writer, producer and daughter of famed civil rights activists Malcolm and Betty Shabazz, motivates her audiences to learn more about history and culture. For more information call 584-9254.
- May 19 (Sat) **WATER CONSERVATION & RAIN GARDENS**. Lessons Learned Garden Tour Series of the Jefferson County Master Gardener Association. Instruction on how to select plants, install and maintain a rain garden, including water conservation and water management techniques for ornamental and vegetable gardens. Visit www.jcmastergardeners.org
- May 19 (Sat) **CULTURAL SHOWCASE: IRAN**. Iroquois Branch Public Library, 2:30PM. Meet local natives of Iran. Performances and cultural exhibits. Visit www.lfpl.org
- May 21 (Mon) **SOCIAL CHANGE BOOK CLUB**. Every third Monday, Heine Bros., 119 Chenoweth, 6PM. For book list, Visit www.greenlistlouisville.com
- May 22 (Tues) **FREE NONPROFIT STARTUP CLINIC** Center for Nonprofit Excellence, 3:30PM. Learn the fundamentals. Pitfalls to avoid. Visit www.cnpe.org
- May 24 (Thurs) **NETWORK LUNCHEON**, University Club, UofL, Noon. Every Fourth Thursday. Spirited and constructive dialogue on race relations in Louisville in a safe and inclusive environment. For reservations call, the UofL Office of Diversity at 852-5719.
- May 24 (Thurs) **FORsooth LABELING**. Presbyterian Seminary, Nelson Hall, Room 10. 6:30 PM. Every fourth Thursday. We need volunteers! Many hands make light work, and the opposite is also true! So please join us if you can. Call 451-5658 for more information!
- May 26 (Sat) **FRENCH CIRCLE: RWANDA**. Iroquois Branch Public Library, 12:30 PM. Immerse yourself in French language with native speakers from Rwanda. Visit www.lfpl.org
- May 26 TO 28 **KENTUCKY REGGAE FESTIVAL**, 3005 River Road, 2pm TO 11:30pm. Live reggae music, Caribbean vendor market, Authentic Jamaican food, Kids entertainment area. Visit www.bisig.com
- May 31 (Thurs) **MERTON’S ENVIRONMENTAL VISION**. Carmichael’s Bookstore, 2720 Frankfort Ave, 7PM to 8PM. Monica Weis will discuss and sign copies of her book “The Environmental Vision of Thomas Merton.” Call 896-6950 for more information.
- June 1 (Fri) **THE GRASSROOTS GALA**. 4PM to 10PM. Meet neighbors from all of Metro Louisville’s neighborhoods. Live music. Neighborhood Street Feast. Local foods. Meet the authors of “Two Centuries of Black Louisville.” Visit www.thegrassrootsgala.org

THE WAYS AND MEANS OF PEACEMAKING include Advocacy, Witnessing, Service, Organizing, Financial Support, Teaching & Learning, and Prayer & Meditation. We hope you find these examples inspiring.

Please recycle FORsooth to a friend, and please ask her or him to do the same.

Regular Meeting Times for Area Organizations

- ADDICTION RECOVERY ADVOCATES OF KENTUCKIANA – (485-1248)
- AIDS INTERFAITH MINISTRIES (AIM) OF KENTUCKIANA, INC. – 1st Tuesday (574-6085 or 574-6086)
- AMERICA 2000 DEMOCRATIC CLUB – 4th Tuesday. Contact Enid Redman at 459-0616 or John Mine at pappajohn15@gmail.com. Also see www.America2000plus.net.
- AMERICANS UNITED FOR SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE – Every month at noon (contact Paul Simmons: 608-7517)
- AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL – 1st Saturday (Sharon: 637-8951) at Heine Bros. on Douglass Loop
- APPAPF [American Palestine Public Affairs Forum] – 2nd Thursday (773-1836)
- BREAD FOR THE WORLD – Last Monday every other month (239-4317 for details)
- CAPA [Citizens Against Police Abuse] – 2nd Thursday (778-8130) Meet at Braden Center, 3208 W. Broadway
- CART [Coalition for the Advancement of Regional Transportation] – 3rd Wednesday, Union Station, TARC Board Room
- CLOUT [CITIZENS OF LOUISVILLE ORGANIZED AND WORKING TOGETHER] – (583-1267)
- COMMITTEE FOR PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST – 2nd Monday (456-6586)
- COMMON CAUSE – Ad hoc discussions. Continuous engagement. www.commoncause.org/ky
- COMMUNITY FARM ALLIANCE OF JEFFERSON COUNTY – 2nd Tuesday (223-3655)
- COUNTER RECRUITMENT, “Aim Higher” – Second Sunday (893-2334)
- EARTH SAVE LOUISVILLE – 2nd Saturday (299-9520) www.LouisvilleEarthSave.org
- FAIRNESS CAMPAIGN – Quarterly community dialogues and volunteer opportunities (893-0788)
- FDR/LINCOLN LEGACY CLUB – 1st Thursday, papajohn15@bellsouth.net
- FELLOWSHIP OF RECONCILIATION – 4th Monday (609-7985 or 291-2506)
- FRIENDS FOR HOPE (Support Group for Adult Cancer Survivors) – 4th Wednesday at 6:30 PM.
- FRIENDSHIP FORCE OF LOUISVILLE – 2nd Tuesday (893-8436)
- GREATER LOUISVILLE SIERRA CLUB – 3rd Tuesday, 7pm. (502-644-0659)
- INTERFAITH PATHS TO PEACE – 1st Tuesday (214-7322)
- IRFI [ISLAMIC RESEARCH FOUNDATION INTERNATIONAL, INC.] – Sundays at 6:00 PM (502-423-1988)
- JOBS WITH JUSTICE KENTUCKY (582-5454)
- JURISDICTIONARY CLUB OF LOUISVILLE – Know the law and how to use it (500-8161)
- JUSTICE RESOURCE CENTER – (345-5386)
- KFTC [KENTUCKIANS FOR THE COMMONWEALTH] – 2nd Monday (589-3188)
- KITOD [KENTUCKIANA INTERFAITH TASKFORCE ON DARFUR] – (553-6172)
- KY ALLIANCE AGAINST RACIST & POLITICAL REPRESSION – 3rd Monday (778-8130)
- KY COALITION TO ABOLISH THE DEATH PENALTY – (541-9998)
- KITLAC [KY INTERFAITH TASKFORCE ON LATIN AMERICA & THE CARIBBEAN] – 2nd Wednesday (479-9262)
- LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS (502-895-5218), www.louisville-orglwv
- LOUISVILLE COMMITTEE FOR ISRAELI/PALESTINIAN STATES – 3rd Sunday (451-5658)
- LOUISVILLE PEAK OIL GROUP – 2nd Saturday (425-6645)
- LPAC [LOUISVILLE PEACE ACTION COMMUNITY] – (456-6914)
- LOUISVILLE WOMEN CHURCH – Meditation every Sunday (473-8435)
- LOUISVILLE YOUTH GROUP – Friday nights (893-0788), www.louisvilleyouthgroup.org
- LOUISVILLIANS IN FAVOR OF EQUALITY (LIFE) – 4th Sunday (384-3875)
- METRO SWEEP FOR ACCESS – 3rd Tuesday (895-0866 or 899-9261)
- METROPOLITAN HOUSING COALITION – 4th Wednesday (584-6858)
- MIGHTY KINDNESS – mightykindness@gmail.com (235-0711)
- MUHAMMAD ALI INSTITUTE FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE, at UL (852-6372)
- NAACP [NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE] – 3rd Monday (776-7608)
- NAMI [NATIONAL ALLIANCE FOR THE MENTALLY ILL] – 2nd Monday (245-5287)
- PARENTS, FAMILIES & FRIENDS OF LESBIANS AND GAYS (P-FLAG) – 3rd Sunday (329-0229)
- PEACE & COMPASSION BUDDHA CIRCLE/CML – (451-2193, brozier@bellsouth.net)
- RCRC [RELIGIOUS COALITION FOR REPRODUCTIVE CHOICE] – (866-606-0988)
- RESULTS (a hunger lobby) – 2nd Saturday (451-4907)
- SIERRA CLUB INNER CITY OUTINGS – 2nd Thursday, 7:30 PM (558-0073)
- WOMEN IN TRANSITION (WIT) – every Wednesday, 6-8 PM (636-0160)

Note: If your group would like to be added to this list or if information needs to be updated, please let us know by calling 458-8056.