



MARY AND MARTHA MAIL CIRCLE UMW

Christ United Methodist Church - Mobile, Alabama

SEPTEMBER 2014

Bible Study for the International Day of Peace

**International Day of Peace 2014
Is Sunday, September 21**

In the beautiful worship space at the Church Center for the United Nations, written on the bible holder on the altar, are the words of Jesus from Luke 19:42: "Would that you knew this day the things that make for peace." These words were spoken as Jesus overlooked Jerusalem, weeping, on the day he had borrowed the colt and people had put palms on the ground before him.

This story of the palms (but not often of his words spoken) is traditionally recalled during Palm Sunday worship services. We know that at that moment, Jesus knew a lot about the world, about peacemaking, about its consequences when oppression is everywhere. He knew that he, personally, was in trouble with the authorities because of the truthful word he brought and the actions that demonstrated the inclusion of all persons in the Kingdom of God. He knew there would be hard and cruel times ahead. And he knew that it was the fears and injustices of the occupying Roman powers and the fears and injustices of the religious authorities that would empower that cruelty. Yet everything Jesus did and said spread peace, even when it meant difficult words and provocative actions. Jesus simply spoke peoples' truths.

It is appropriate that these are the core words for our work at the Church Center for the United Nations — our work is about the things that make for peace in a place where all the world's powers come together. And certainly the world needs peacemakers. All over the world wars are erupting; the anger of the people and nations hoping that violence will overcome and give us peace is often given to us as the only answer. What are disciples of Jesus Christ to do in this day and age?

Here are some of our beliefs as we look at a

"WOULD THAT
YOU KNEW THE
THINGS THAT
MAKE FOR
PEACE"



scripturally based centrality of peacemaking:

- Jesus's key mission was peace (not winning or control).
- The early church witnessed to peace (not winning or control).
- Peace is more than the absence of war.
- The foundation of peace can only be justice.
- The root of peace is grace.
- Peace must be waged with the energy of waging war.
- Peacemakers often cause trouble.
- Peacemaking is not optional.
- God's future promise is peace.

Let's look further into these deep key messages of our faith.

Peace, not winning, was the mission of Jesus. Jesus' role as "The Prince of Peace" was foretold by Isaiah (9:6). Angels announcing his birth declared "Glory to God" and "peace on earth" (Luke 2:14). Weeping over Jerusalem, Jesus prayed: "would that you knew the things that make for peace" (Luke 19:41-42).

How do you see Jesus' life being about peace?

Peace, not winning, was the witness of the early church.

The new community created in Christ bore witness by its reconciled fellowship: "And all who believed were together and had all things in common" (Acts 2:44-47; 4:32-37). Paul urged that the church's "feet" be "shod with the gospel of

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Selections From the Prayer Calendar + *Mary and Martha Birthdays*

- SEP 1 Carolyn Anderson (D)
 SEP 2 Cuba: Leadership for church women
 SEP 3 Judi Day (D)
 SEP 4 Leslie J. Hobson (D)
 SEP 5 Patricia Marks (D)
 SEP 6 National Plan for Hispanic Ministries
 SEP 7 Barbara Jean Blevins (D)
 SEP 8 Good Neighbor Settlement, Texas
 SEP 9 Adam Shaw (MI)
 SEP 10 Selena Ruth Smith (D)
 SEP 11 Jamie Vazquez (NPHLM)
 SEP 12 Mary C. Gehrke (D)
 SEP 13 Virginia Canafax (M)
 SEP 14 Ruth Ingulsrud Grubel (M)
 SEP 15 Jennifer McCallum (S)
 SEP 16 Gordon Graner
 SEP 17 Skip Hodges (M)
 SEP 18 Rachel DeBos (US-2)
 Ruth Howard
- SEP 19 Puerto Rico: Yes, I Am Sure Project
 SEP 20 Mary Randall Zibguo (M)
 SEP 21* Christine Erb-Kanzleiter (M)
 SEP 22 Deborah Archie (CCW)
 Melissa Motes
- SEP 23 Lou Ann Staggs (D)
 SEP 24 Israel/Palestine: Bethlehem Bible College
 Vera Moore
- SEP 25 Susan Hunt (D)
 SEP 26 Margaret "Peg" Wantuck (D)
 SEP 27 Marjie Hrabe (D)
 SEP 28 Marie Greathouse (M)
 SEP 29 B. Lee Manns (D)
 SEP 30 Rachel Patman (D)

*Sunday, September 21, 2014 - 2:30 pm UMW Mobile Annual District Day

Theodore First United Methodist Church

This is our annual meeting where there is a guest speaker, Deaconess Clara Ester, and items of business to be conducted:

- Roll Call of groups
- Mobile by-laws updated
- Awards Presented
- Approve Budget for 2015
- Election of Mission Team
- Installation of Officers 2015

Response Moments by *Harriett Jane Olson*

It's not about the armor. I've always squirmed a bit at the image Paul uses in Ephesians 6 to talk about the being ready to face opposition. Most likely, Paul is distinguishing the preparation of the Christians from the preparation of the occupying forces of Rome. Truth, justice, faith, salvation and the word of God are the equipment that we need in order to stand firm, as opposed to weapons, shields and protective clothing. Instead, my mind always goes to that amazing battlefield scene when the boy David is being dressed to face Goliath and is totally dwarfed by Saul's battle gear, like a child playing dress-up.

In a way, of course, that's true for us as well as we try to "put on" the sort of truth, justice and virtues to which God calls us. These values and concepts seem huge and overwhelming in the context of our competitive, individualistic, eye-for-an-eye world.

That's why I like the part about shoes. In verse 15, we're instructed to put shoes on our feet so that we are ready to spread the good news of peace (Common English Bible). This is the one piece of equipment that is not listed with a spiritual counterpart. This is concrete, understandable preparation. We know that God is at work in the world, that there will be conflict, but that peace is the vision for the new creation.

Lion, lamb, mourners, sorrowful — will all be transformed.

In some mind-blowing way, we are to live the values of the new creation now, even in situations of conflict. If Paul is directing the believers to be a force that operates counter to the forces of Rome, there will be significant conflict — including imprisonment, stoning and the rest of it. But we are to speak peace; to tell the good news of peace. We should note that there is no indication that this is a purely spiritual idea of peace, nor that it is purely individual. The letter that is now Ephesians was written to the *community*, read to the *community* and preserved by the *community*. We hear the echo of the prophets calling for — or announcing the end of — peace in Zion.

It's no wonder then that United Methodist Women continue a tradition of work for peace. Women as peacemakers is the subject of a fairly recent United Nations resolution, but it has long been part of the work of faith-filled women. Since the 1950s when we participated in practical steps toward developing the Church Center for the United Nations through to this year when we brought together United Methodist women from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, Mozambique and Zimbabwe to talk about what might prepare the way for peace in the Great Lakes region, we have been investing in peacemaking. It is good news for the whole world that God desires peace, and that peace will be established as part of the fulfillment of God's promises. It is amazing that we get to be part of spreading the word and taking practical steps to make peace possible.

It's time to get your shoes on!

Source: unitedmethodistwomen.org

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peace" (Eph. 6:15).

How do you see the early church to be about peace?

Peace is more than the absence of war.

Peace — shalom — occurs when captives are released (Luke 4:18), when outcasts are gathered (Zephaniah 3:19), and when the hungry have plenty to eat (Joel 2:19-26, Luke 1:53, 1 Samuel 2:1-8).

How are we a peaceful society? How are we a violent society?

The foundation of peace is justice.

"The effect of righteousness (justice) will be peace," predicted Isaiah (32:17). "Righteousness and peace will kiss," wrote the psalmist (Psalm 85:10). "Sowing justice" will result in peace, said Hosea (10:12-14).

What is justice? Why must peacemaking found itself in justice? What about injustice creates violence?

Peacemaking is rooted in grace.

In Jesus' prayer, our "debts" are forgiven in the measure to which we forgive others (Matthew 6:12). "Whoever is forgiven little, loves little" (Luke 7:47). It is grace which frees us from fear (1 John 4:18) and empowers us to risk our lives for the sake of justice and peace.

Why must peacemaking root itself in grace? What does this mean?

Peace, like war, is waged.

Peacemakers are not passive, but active. Peter, echoing the psalmist, urges us to "seek peace, and to pursue it" (1 Peter 3:11; Psalm 34:14). Jesus urged worshippers to take the initiative to settle disputes (Matthew 5:23-24). Peace includes loving and feeding enemies (Luke 6:27; Romans 12:20).

What does it mean to wage peace in your life?

Peacemakers sometimes cause trouble.

Jesus turned over the tables of oppressive money-changers (John 2:13-16). When he says, "I come not to bring peace but division" (Luke 12:51), the "peace" of which he speaks merely disguises an order of injustice (see Jeremiah 6:14-15). It was Jesus' peacemaking mission which landed him on the cross (Colossians 1:20).

Do you have a story where your own peacemaking caused trouble?

Peacemaking is not optional.

We believe that the separation between "preaching the Gospel" and "working for peace and justice" is a mistaken understanding of biblical truth. Jesus prayed: "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven" (Matthew 6:10). We lie if we say we love God yet fail to assist neighbors in need (1 John 4:20). Loving enemies — whether close at hand or far away — is the way to become children of God (Matthew 5:44-45).

What do you think of this?

God's promised future is peace.

Though now living as "aliens" in a strange land, peacemakers have caught a glimpse of how the future will finally unfold. Both Isaiah and John's Revelation speak of the coming "new heaven and new earth" (Isaiah 65:17-22; Revelation 21:1). The day is coming, says Micah, when nations "shall beat their swords into ploughshares...and neither shall they learn war any more" (4:3-4). On that day, creation itself — which "has been groaning in travail...will be set free from its bondage to decay" (Romans 8:19-24).

How does it go with your soul?

For individual reflection:

How are you fulfilling the high calling of disciples of Jesus Christ — enacting the things that make for peace in your United Methodist Women, your church and the world around you?

You are invited

to attend

International Day of Peace Symposium
Friday, Sept 19, 2014 - 9:20 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Church Center for the United Nations
777 UN Plaza - New York City, New York

Welcome by Harriett Olson,
General Secretary and CEO of United Methodist Women
Speakers:

- Helen Clark, UNDP Administrator
- Bill McKibben, Co-Founder of 350.org
- Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, UN Women Executive Director (invited)
- Cora Weiss, UN Representative, International Peace Bureau
- Otilia Luz de Coti, Director of the International Indigenous Women's Forum

To attend the New York symposium, click [here](#) to register by Sept. 5, 2014.

“PEACE BEGINS WITH A SMILE”

MOTHER TERESA

Some Questions to Consider:

In Luke 19:42, as Jesus looked out over Jerusalem, he wept and cried out, “Would that you knew the things this day that make for peace!”

- In the Bible study, you'll find a synthesis of some of what scripture says makes for peace. Name some of those qualities of life here.
- How are you or your work affected by these principles of Biblical peace?
- At the U.N., on the International Day of Peace observance, we will be looking at how people's access to water, food and health are affected by the cross-cutting issues of women's participation, climate change, and current development rules and laws.
- What are your ideas about these cross-cutting issues and peace in your world or nearby worlds?
- What specific actions do you think are essential for an economic development that makes sure that everyone has food, water and access to health care in your family, your neighborhood, your town, your state, your nation?
- While you're thinking about that, does it matter who is making the decisions, who should be at the table?
- What about at the global level? Who should have a seat at the development table? Who is right now making these global decisions? And why does it matter?
- How is income inequality linked to the lack of peace in your family or neighborhood?
- What is meant by a “just peace”? how is this different than a lack of war?
- How would the world change if the globe's 852 million hungry people simply were able to grow, afford and access good, culturally appropriate foods for their families?
- What are the things that support conflict and deteriorate people's ability to feed their families? And what helps this to happen?
- What do you think about guaranteeing that every human being has water in their home and place of work, whether they could afford it or not?
- What is one thing that you could do in your community to foster peace this week?

Write it down and send it to:
International Day of Peace
Church Center for the United Nations
777 United Nations Plaza, 11th floor
New York, NY 10017

Source: unitedmethodistwomen.org

WELCOME - NEW MEMBER

BLAIR PARRETT

Looking forward to sharing thoughts from Blair soon in our virtual meetings.

THANKS

NOTALSIA WHITING

for serving on the UMW committee for Children's Sabbath. Please say, “Yes” if Notalsia calls on you for help.

Service Projects 2014

Your involvement with service projects will be published here as you report them to us

- Gift to Mission in memory of Elizabeth Olson.
- Gift to Open Door Ministries - display cases
- Gift to Crossroads - meals at McKemie Place
- Gift to member - flood victim
- Gift to member's friend - hardship, illness.
- Gift to Children's Sabbath

and shared with CUMW treasurer, combined with others from CUMC and throughout the organization.

This publication is the monthly virtual meeting of the Mary & Martha Mail Circle, United Methodist Women at Christ United Methodist Church, Mobile, Alabama. Our Circle is just like each of the other Circles of Christ UMW with the exception that we do not have monthly meetings other than by this “virtual” program, devotion, prayer calendar/concerns, and Response moments. We make annual pledges to mission and participate in the projects of CUMW in all ways possible. We attend General Meetings as we are able. We constantly keep each other and each woman of UMW in our prayers.

Questions? Contact: Circle Coordinator, Vera Moore - 888-248-1680 or email - vmoores4474@gmail.com