

History Notes of Multifaith Voices for Peace & Justice
(Updated 9/21/13)

2002

Dec. 22, 2002 – Interfaith Peace Vigil in front of PA City Hall, with lots of music, band, intergenerational choir – about 250-300 in attendance

2003

Jan 14– first organizational gathering (First Pres, PA)

Feb 18 – second organizational gathering (Our Lady of the Rosary, PA)

March 8-9 – 24 hour vigil, PA City Hall Plaza; intergenerational times & children’s activities, Islamic prayers (2 times) & lecture, Jewish ending of the Sabbath, liturgical dance, Meditation & centering prayer, Unitarian worship, youth teach-in, midnight ritual, Tao Te Ching & Taoist Eucharist, All Saints Episcopal Eucharist, Christian Science Lecture, Quaker Adult Study, School of Americas watch teach-in, Just War teach-in, “Not with my Money teach-in, Nonviolent Direct Action teach-in, closing worship with dramatic reading of MLK’s “Beyond Vietnam” speech with prayers, scripture, songs, and children’s choir; anywhere from 5 (in the wee hours) to about 500 (for the closing worship) in attendance

March 22 – Interfaith Service 2 days after war on Iraq began; First Pres, PA, about 300 in attendance; offering received for LIFE – Islamic Relief for Iraq

April 7 – “Plotting and Praying for Peace” – organizational meeting with educational time – CAIR, ING, intro to “Rebuilding America’s Defense” and “How do we work for peace in the midst of war?”

April 27-- Interfaith Service for Peace at Grace Lutheran, introduction of “One Voice” youth interfaith choir; Jewish, Muslim, Unitarian & Christian speakers

May 18 – Interfaith Youth Service for Peace at First Baptist, more from “One Voice,” plus Unitarian, Jewish, Presbyterian & Lutheran youth speakers and Muslim youth music.

June 7 – Teach-in – Roman Catholic, Muslim, Presbyterian speakers, at Muslim Community Association in Santa Clara

June 22 – Interfaith Service at Congregation Kol Emeth, Charles Liteky, speaker, offering taken for CWS directed to Iraq – about 80 in attendance

September 11 – Interfaith Service of Healing & Peace, Friends Meeting House – abt 60 in attendance

November 11 – Veterans Day Vigil for Peace, PA City Hall

2004

Feb 29 –Speakers: Meg & Peter Lumsdaine, just back from Iraq, Friends Mtg House, 50 attending

March 21 – Interfaith Service for Peace; 1-year marking of the start of the war on Iraq, First Methodist Church, PA, Susan Galleymore, speaker

Mary 27 – Memorial Day Vigil for Peace: Honoring Lives, Protesting Deaths, PA City Hall, closed streets for funeral march, about 200 in attendance

July 15 – Kathleen Namphy, speaker from Christian Peacemaker Team in Iraq; All Saints Episcopal; about 60 attended

Oct. 3 – Teach-in – Grace Lutheran Church; about 180 attended; 5 speakers – Byron Bland, Amy Lansky, Carmichael Peters, Diane Morrison, Tarek Mourad “The Road to Peace begins with Truth”

Nov. 11 – Veterans Day service for Peace – Stanford Memorial Church; Portola Valley Presbyterian choir sang; Rabbi Sheldon Lewis and Vet. Craig Wiesner among speakers

2005

February/March – Peace Workshop for Middle School age kids – led by 2 Stanford interns – Katie Cueva and Priti Sanghani – attempted for 2 Saturdays but only 1 youth came; ended up teaching 2 extended class periods at Jordan Middle School with teacher Mary Sano – and was great!

March 20 – Interfaith Peace Service marking 2nd anniversary of war; in San Jose at Unitarian Church “Producing Peace” – about 170 attending; part of regional anti-war rally

May – first annual Memorial Day Peace Picnic at Mitchell Park – over 100 attending

June – delegation met with Congresswoman Eshoo re: Patriot Act

October: Traditions of Peace Confluence of Holy Days

Uniting in Song, Oct 2, Gandhi’s b-day; Protestant World Communion; First Congregational PA; great age and race diversity; about 150 attending

Fasting for Darfur, Oct 6, Palo Alto City Hall Plaza - National Fast Day for Darfur, Muslim’s Ramadan Fast, Jewish Rosh Hashanah; co-sp with Stanford student group

Opening Doors for Mutual Understanding, Oct 16, MCA, Ramadan, CAIR sponsored & we helped

Gathering in the Sukkah to Break Fast Together, Oct 23, Kol Emeth; Kol Emeth sponsored & we helped

Nov 3 - Pakistani Earthquake Relief press conference at First Pres, PA – great attendance & press

Nov. 10 - Veterans Day Eve Worship & Teach-in at First Baptist PA; Karen Meredith among speakers

Nov 22 - Pakistani Earthquake Relief Overnight Vigil at PA City Hall Plaza

2006

January 16-21 – sponsored week of daily noon vigils for Darfur at El Camino & Embarcadero with Kol Emeth & Stanford student group building up to Darfur Day of Conscience in April

March 18 – Multifaith Gathering for Peace at All Saints’ Episcopal, PA; intergenerational worship following which we joined the PPJC rally & march marking 4th anniversary of war; Stanford interns Lindsay Caldwell, Maia Goodman and Josephina Guillen helped plan and lead; Dave Howell came with Clarence the Camel and Sohab Malik (Muslim youth) sang and they both were awesome; Diana Gibson gave words of reflection

March 25 – Iraq: The Power of Truth in a War Based on Lies; First Pres PA – speakers Scott Ritter, Ray McGovern, Faiza Al-Araji, Medea Benjamin; about 350 attending

May 7 – Co-sponsored AMV Open House

May 11 – Given “Blessed are the Peacemakers” award by the US Conference of the World Council of Churches (plus generous gift from the offering)

May – second annual Memorial Day Peace Picnic at Mitchell Park – over 100 attending

June – joined National Religious Campaign Against Torture

July 26 – Call for Cease Fire in Middle East – vigil at Lytton Plaza

August – trip to ICE detention center in Yuba City

Sept 21 – “Iraq: What Next?” speaker program featuring David Abernethy & Ray McGovern with interfaith panel response; First Unitarian Church, PA; about 250 attending

Sept 27 – Religious Leaders Statement Against Torture signed by 17 local, state and national organizations; 6 state and national religious leaders; 96 religious leaders within CA and 30 religious leaders from outside of California; press conference held at First Pres, PA; excellent pressure on and relationship with Lantos’ and Eshoo’s staff and vote

Oct. 1 - **first Op-Ed in SJ Mercury** (re: torture and Military Commissions Act)

Oct 21 – Vigil Opposing the Death Penalty at Lytton Plaza; co-sponsored with Californians of Faith Against the Death Penalty

Oct 27 – Joined the Lockheed Vigil in Sunnyvale led by Ed Ehmke

November – showed “Outlawed” dvd on extraordinary renditions & torture

2007

March 16 – Multifaitth Peace Witness at First Methodist with speaker Aimee Allison in conjunction with 7 people from MVPJ at the Christian Peace Witness in Washington DC, which we co-sponsored.

March-May – co-sponsored 4-part once-a-month film series with Jewish Voice for Peace in Sunnyvale

April 2 – Press Conference & advocacy for Ramirez family in the midst of deportation; continued advocacy through the fall re: immigration policies and detention practices, including working with Congresswoman Anna Eshoo and her staff

April 5 – 2nd Op-Ed piece in SJ Mercury – this one on immigration & the Ramirez family

May – third annual Memorial Day Peace Picnic at Mitchell Park – over 100 attending

July 2 – Immigration Forum at First United Methodist, PA; KQED cosponsored

July 12 – Visit to ICE Detention Center in San Francisco

September 11 – Prayers for Peace vigil at Friends Meeting House

September – Met with Congresswoman Anna Eshoo (packed her office) urging her to cosponsor HR1352, the “stop out-sourcing torture” bill (In response to our meeting she did indeed cosponsor the bill!)

Joined Iraq Moratorium actions (3rd Friday of each month through end of year)

October 7-8 – Interfaith Fast End the War in Iraq – began fast at FUMC, PA with Nichola Torbett of the Network for Spiritual Progressives & Rabbi Sheldon Lewis speaking; concluded fast at Lytton Plaza with Rabbi Michael Lerner speaking

October 19 –Co-sponsored with Iraq Moratorium group a Motorcade to End the war; Ray McGovern spoke at the conclusion

October 20 –co-sponsor End the Death Penalty vigil as part of Amnesty International’s Weekend of Faith and Action with California People of Faith Against the Death Penalty; Lytton Plaza in Palo Alto

October 24 –showing of “Ghosts of Abu Ghraib” at FUMC, PA

November 16 – Press Conference/Vigil outside of Jeppesen International in San Jose protesting their involvement with extraordinary rendition flights (co-sponsored with Iraq Moratorium)

November – Supported Immigrant family from East Palo Alto after their father was picked up and deported the day after Thanksgiving

December – Interfaith winter holy day ad: “Work and Pray for Peace & Call for an End to the War in Iraq” in Palo Alto Weekly and San Jose Mercury News

2008

March 7 – In Washington, D.C. joined with Olive Branch Interfaith Peace Partnership in Witness to End the War in Iraq; joined local efforts in bay area as well

March – participated in annual Good Friday vigil to protest nuclear weapons at Livermore Nuclear Weapons Laboratory (2 MVPJ members arrested)

May 3-4 – Eyes Wide Open Cost of War exhibit – 36 hour presence at Kings’ Plaza in PA; Opening, Closing & Saturday evening programs with prayers, readings from diverse faith traditions, a film, speakers, and taps

June 26 (U.N. International Day to Abolish Torture) – Silent vigil outside of Jeppesen International

August 23 – Co-sponsored American Muslim Voice Open House

Fall Series: Faithful Citizens Go to the Polls

Sept. 10 – screening of “Soldiers of Conscience” film with producer speaking and Roman Catholic author Tobias Wolff leading discussion; 80 in attendance, First Baptist Church, PA

September 15 – Climate Change Working Group (we co-sponsored California Interfaith Power & Light event)

October 1 – screening of “Soldiers of Conscience” film in San Jose

October 2 – Immigration: Local Stories & National Policies – panel with immigrants, speakers from the New Sanctuary Movement, Sue Dremann from Palo Alto Weekly, and representative from Archdiocese of San Francisco. First Congregational Church, PA

October 20 – Globalization & Immigration with Raj Patel, Keynote; FUMC, PA

November 8 – Vigil to End the Death Penalty; cosponsored with California People of Faith Against the Death Penalty

November 13 – Delegation to Congresswoman Anna Eshoo's office asking her to call for a Presidential Executive Order to End Torture; Eshoo did so putting it into the Congressional Record in December

2009

January – Met with Editorial Board of the San Jose Mercury News asking them to call for a Presidential Executive Order to End Torture; in response to our visit they did so, plus ran an **op-ed** authored by 2 of our members (Lewis & Gibson)

June – Sponsored major 2 day “Torture is a Moral Issue” event; Friday night and Saturday at First Presbyterian and First UMC in Palo Alto; 200 Friday night and 120 on Saturday in attendance; speakers included Dr. David DeCosse (SCU ethicist and Roman Catholic theologian); Ben Daniel (Presbyterian pastor, author and political commentator), Ray McGovern (former CIA analyst), Rev. Carol Wickersham (founder of No2Torture & on NRCAT board), Terrence Karney (former Army interrogator and trainer), Rev. Rita Nakashima Brock, and volunteers for the Center for Healing for Victims of Torture.

August-September – took leadership in faith community's response to local teen suicides; sponsored interfaith panel at Cubberly Community Center with several hundred in attendance

September – became involved with nuclear disarmament issue and committed to work with the Silicon Valley Chapter of the Nuclear-Age Peace Foundation

November - cosponsored speaker Dr. Lynn Eden, “Inside the Minds of Nuclear Warriors” at Los Altos library

November – issued statement re: Fort Hood Tragedy (authored primarily by Rev. Amy Zucker Morgenstern)

2010

March 21 – “Listen to the Voices of Children Born in Places of War” Public worship for Peace in Afghanistan and Pakistan – at Lytton Plaza; gathered children's words and drawing for viewing and meditation; held prayers and had some singing

March – MVPJ received Peace Award from American Muslim Voice

May – Commissioned and sold “Mother of Mother's Day Greeting Cards for Peace” with quotations from Julia Ward Howe's 1847 Mother's Day Proclamation for Peace. (Art by “Design Action” and printed by “Inkworks Press”)

Co-sponsored Nuclear Age Peace Foundation's spring series of speakers

September – Interfaith Peace Witness marking U.N. International Peace Day; Speakers included Rana Tomaira (born in Baghdad, Iraq, works with Iraqi children wounded from war), Len and Libby Traubman (creators of Jewish Palestinian Dialogue Group), and Afghan Youth Peace Volunteers (via videos); began in park with International Peace Village; worship held at St. Thomas Aquinas Church.

July – Cosponsored AMV Open House

Summer-Fall - Dick Duda led us in preparing a Multifaith Study Guide for the documentary, "Nuclear Tipping Point" (features George Shultz, Henry Kissinger, William Perry and Sam Nunn)

Showed documentary "Nuclear Tipping Point" using multifaith discussion guide

September - Supported the Third National Quaker Conference on Torture and Accountability with Fr. Roy Bourgeois as speaker (held at Ben Lomond)

December – Cosponsored Haiti Photography Exhibit to raise funds and awareness for Haiti after earthquake

2011

February – Cosponsored showing of "The Human Turbine" film documenting efforts of Palestinians and Israelis working together to provide needed electricity for village in Hebron hills.

March – "The War Goes On: Featuring Camilo Mejia" with interfaith panel response; at UUCPA

April – Cosponsored "The Vision of Reykjavik: Steps Toward a World Free of Nuclear Weapons" – a 4 part study series led by MVPJ steering committee member Dick Duda.

May – Continued selling "Mother of Mother's Day Greeting Cards for Peace" with quotations from Julia Ward Howe's 1847 Mother's Day Proclamation for Peace. (Art by "Design Action" and printed by "Inkworks Press")

June – "Nuclear Abolition Day" – urged people to write letters to mayors asking them to call for end to nuclear weapons and declare their cities nuclear free zones.

August – "Make August a Nuclear Free Future Month" – sponsored speakers and action at Livermore Nuclear Laboratory marking 66th anniversary of U.S. bombing of Nagasaki and Hiroshima

August – "Budrus: A Village United in Nonviolent Resistance" – sponsored documentary showing with South Bay Jewish Voice for Peace and others

September - Encouraged people to ask Congress to call for scientific assessment of risks of reducing our nuclear arsenal.

September – Hosted "Windows and Mirrors" (from American Friends Service Committee) display of banners depicting daily experiences of Afghan citizens; banners were displayed in several local congregations as well as at King Plaza in Palo Alto

Fall-Winter – worked with Palo Alto City officials re: use of city plazas for freedom of speech events

December – Defend Civil Rights for Everyone: Held vigil on 12/15, anniversary of adoption of the Bill of Rights, and worked with Muslim Peace Coalition, Bill of Rights defense Committee, NRCAT, Center for Victims of Torture and American Muslim Voice to raise awareness about the National Defense Authorization Act (2012) that allowed for indefinite military detention of anyone without charges, court review or trial and made it more difficult to close Guantanamo Bay.

2012

April – Sponsored "The State of the National Security State 2012" talk by Ray McGovern at First Baptist Church (with PPJC); about 60 people in attendance

July – Offered scholarship for student to attend Nuclear Age Peace Foundation Peace Leadership Workshop in Santa Barbara with Paul Chappell (in conjunction with the Silicon Valley Chapter of Nuclear Age Peace Foundation and Los Altos Voices for Peace); Scholarship awarded to Stanford student Keryn Breiterman-Loader

July – Cosponsored Woody Guthrie Singalong with Reach and Teach in San Mateo

August – First Real World Peacemakers Event (potluck and presentation) with AFSC General Secretary

August - Real World Peacemakers Event (potluck and presentation) with Christian Peacemaker Team Outreach Coordinator

Created MVPJ Affiliate Circle

October – sent MVPJ representative Neil Penn to Mahatma Gandhi Peace Prayer Day in San Leandro

2013

March – Eyes Wide Open Exhibit

April – Received \$1,000 grant from NRCAT for 2013 spring-summer efforts to encourage Senator Dianne Feinstein to support making public the Senate Intelligence Committee sponsored report on the use of torture by the CIA.

- write op-eds on this issue (one written by MVPJ members & published in SJ Mercury News)
- ask religious leaders to send letter to Feinstein urging release of report (several written)
- organize delegation of religious leaders to meet with Feinstein or staff to discuss (done in June)
- ask local congregations to show NRCAT's updated "Ending U.S. Sponsored Torture Forever" film (film shown in several congregations)

April – Real World Peacemaker Event on Right Use of World Resources

June – UUCPA and Catholic Parish of NRCAT's "Ending U.S. Torture Forever"

July – Offered scholarship for student to attend Nuclear Age Peace Foundation Peace Leadership Workshop in Santa Barbara with Paul Chappell (in conjunction with the Silicon Valley Chapter of Nuclear Age Peace Foundation and Los Altos Voices for Peace); Scholarship awarded to Stanford student Cole Manley

July – Real World Peacemaker Event with Diane Randall of Friends Committee on National Legislation (at UUCPA)

September – MVPJ issued statement against use of military force against Syria; cosponsored vigil outside Rep. Eshoo's office; Eshoo committed to vote against any such resolutions

September – Cosponsored AMV 9/11 Peace Picnic