

Peacemaking – where to now?

You may remember that in the early 1980s Clergy for Peace formed to address the then increasing nuclear threat, with an aim of bringing the conversation and action about nuclear war into the churches. One of the main events was the Palm Sunday Peace services. You will also remember that there were various church social justice groups who began working together in the area of peace. We were a mix of formally appointed groups, and other ecumenical groups, such as Pax Christi. We formed a network for peace, and worked with other community groups in People for Nuclear Disarmament, held regular events and protests, and organised a couple of inter/national conferences, drawing church people from around Australia and New Zealand.

In the mid-1990s it seemed right to conclude Clergy for Peace as a particular organisation. The baton was handed on to Pax Christi.

In the past decade we have been confronted with the ‘war on terror’, the invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan. In recent years Afghanistan has been a central focus for Pax Christi, although, as in the wider Australian community, it has not rated much interest in church congregations.

A number of us who keep in conversation about these matters suggest that it is time to have a gathering of former members of Clergy for Peace, and anyone else who is interested.

We would like to invite you to meet with us on SATURDAY 25 FEBRUARY 10.00am-12.00noon.

Victorian Council of Churches, Level 4, Causeway House, 306 Little Collins Street, MELBOURNE VIC 3000.

This will be followed by a BYO lunch for those who can stay

We believe it would be good to remember the challenges and victories of the past; to talk with each other about the challenges of the present; to consider how to remain true to the original intention of Clergy/Christian for Peace: encouraging the church to be a peace-making community for the sake of God and the world God loves.

Some of us think it is time to re-energise the task of a ‘Theology of Peace’, writing and reading theology as a basis for acting. Perhaps it is time to consider a regular ‘PRAYERS FOR PEACE’, and/or to provide resources for congregations who are called to this ministry. It is also timely to recognise those who are acting for peace (The Bonhoeffer Collective, Pace E Bene, Pax Christi, the Quakers/Society of Friends and so on) to learn from them, and to seek new and imaginative/prophetic actions in the ministry of peace.

The reality which faces the church is this: Christians, as followers of Jesus Christ are called - in every age and situation - to be makers of peace. It is a given that nations will always go to war. Economies and societies will be lured into fear of the enemy. Christians, regardless of ‘numbers’ or ‘success’ are called to live faithfully in the way of Christ’s peace.

PLEASE CONSIDER COMING TO THIS GATHERING. LET OTHERS WHO MAY BE INTERESTED KNOW ABOUT IT.

If you are interested in attending this gathering, please get in touch with one of the Contacts listed below:

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