4. Report of On Earth Peace

Courageous Leaders & Communities Working for Justice & Peace

2020 Theme: "Nonviolence is a way of life for courageous people"
1st Principle of Kingian Nonviolence Conflict Reconciliation

The teachings of Kingian Nonviolence Conflict Reconciliation have held a meaningful role in the work and direction of On Earth Peace. In 2020, we will lift up the courage embodied in Jesus' life and work by adopting the 1st Principle of Kingian Nonviolence as our theme for the year.

The First Principle, "Nonviolence is a way of life for courageous people," of the Six Principles of Kingian Nonviolence may be the most daunting. Like a scary sign on a chain link fence that reads "DANGER: KEEP OUT," it stands as a warning for the other five principles.

The Second Principle, “Beloved Community is the framework for the future,” may seem all warm and fuzzy and benign, until you dig down to see what it really means. This is not a mere “kumbaya” sentiment, but a call to genuine relationship, which requires work, vulnerability, honesty, commitment, and risk. It is about raising the level of relationships among people to a height where justice prevails and people attain their full human potential. That takes courage.

The Third Principle, "Attack forces of evil not persons doing evil," also comes only with much self-discipline and initiative. Redirecting our natural aggression away from human opponents and over to systems of power exposes ourselves to new relationships with opponents and to full operation of systems of power against us. Acts of courage.

The Fourth Principle, "Accept suffering, without retaliation, for the sake of the cause to achieve the goal," speaks for itself. To risk suffering is the definition of courage.

The Fifth Principle, “Avoid internal violence of the spirit as well as external physical violence," is also very hard to do, and closely tied to principles two through four. Courage.

The Sixth Principle, "The Universe is on the side of justice," can be hard to believe, as we consider the thousands of ways injustice and violence reign and seem impossible to overcome. It takes courage to envision a different world, to create a new reality.

Maybe this sounds like the song of the Cowardly Lion in the Wizard of Oz? But, it is very real. Changing society through active nonviolence is a pathway of courage. This is the same message the Apostle Paul gave to the young church leader Timothy.
"For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline." —2 Timothy 1:7

This is the same message Jesus gives to all his followers. Jesus fully showed us in all he did that “nonviolence is a way of life for courageous people.” Whether your commitment is rooted in faith or based on other values, your courage is the same.

When we see people courageously working for justice and peace, we see Jesus—and that he is with us all the time. This report shares some of the ways we see this courage in our community. Where do you see this courage at work? Send us a note at OEP@OnEarthPeace.org.

DIRECTION OF ON EARTH PEACE

2019 completed our 45th year of the On Earth Peace movement. The OEP board and staff did a tremendous amount of work this year to put our community on a course for the next 45 years, with new guiding statements of values, vision, mission, and 3-year strategic priorities.

ON EARTH PEACE VALUES

Our shared values are what bring us together as the On Earth Peace community. These values guide all our work, and direct our “values-based consensus decision-making” process.

- Jesus-Centered Spirituality -
We follow Jesus into the work of justice and peace. We share in spiritual practices and develop faith resources to help undergird our programs.

- Positive Peace -
We learn, teach and practice dynamic forms of peacemaking which see conflict as an important tool to meet needs, address injustice, correct imbalances of power, and seek healing and reconciliation.

- Anti-Racism/Anti-Oppression -
We commit to name and undo barriers to participation in our programs based on identity, and to work for full inclusion and equity for all who wish to join in our work. We commit to the long-term transformation of On Earth Peace, the church, and society.

- Intergenerational Leadership -
We nurture peacemakers and leaders, and honor the wisdom, skill, and experience of all generations.
- Beloved Community -
We commit to raising the levels of relationships until justice and peace prevail, and all people attain their full human potential.

A VISION OF ON EARTH PEACE

We see a world in Beloved Community, free from oppression, violence, and war.

A present and future “kin-dom of heaven” -- with on earth peace, good will to all.

ON EARTH PEACE MISSION

We develop and walk with leaders and communities who work for justice and peace.

Beginning with our formation in 1974 with a focus on renewing the peace witness of Brethren youth, OEP has always looked toward supporting leadership for peace in each generation. The decades that followed helped us learn that justice and peace go hand in hand, and were central to the work of Jesus and his community -- in their time and place, as in ours.

OEP STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Our program work for the years 2020-2022 will focus on helping leaders and communities apply the spiritual and practical discipline of Kingian Nonviolence Conflict Reconciliation. We also have special priorities for our work within the Church of the Brethren, and our continued long-term journey toward becoming an Anti-Racism/Anti-Oppression organization and community.

1. Develop individuals as leaders with spirituality and skills in Kingian Nonviolence, using groups such as cohorts and communities of learning and action.
2. Walk with leaders and their communities as they take action for justice and peace using the Kingian Nonviolence approach, including accountability, consultation, and organizing in solidarity with current movements.
3. Through our agency responsibilities and opportunities, embolden the Church of the Brethren to become a living peace and justice denomination.
4. Institutionalize Anti-Racism/Anti-Oppression in On Earth Peace practices and structures, including staff and board composition, programs, budgets, policies, and accountability to AR/AO partners including Crossroads and the Supportive Communities Network.

HOW WE WORK

OEP members work together through mutual equipping and accompaniment in a shared core of peace and justice building practices. Our means are our ends, our tools are our work.
While different people and organizations in the OEP community will have different experiences and expertise, everyone is learning and teaching, leading and following, growing together.

OEP also freely provides a shared infrastructure that consists of key frameworks and support platforms and services, to help our extended OEP community do this important work.

WHO WE WORK WITH

OEP works with individuals, churches and community groups, and other organizations who want to learn and use active nonviolence to respond to conflict, injustice, and violence. Our work also includes a special focus on connecting with youth and young adults and people of color.

Individual Practitioners
We use the "community of practice" (CoP) framework for working with individuals. People scattered throughout the church or world who care about a particular peace or justice concern often can feel isolated and powerless, like a "lone voice in the wilderness."

The overarching purposes of an OEP community of practice are to:

• Help people come together to work on justice and peace concerns that deeply matter to them, to overcome a sense of helpless isolation and find new strength in community.
• Help these leaders and their communities develop their capacity and commitment to bring about positive changes in the world with respect to these concerns.
• Build OEP accountability to people and groups who are most affected by each of these respective concerns. We respond to Jesus in these leaders like John the Baptist did in his work when he said, "He must increase, I must decrease." - John 3:30

In 2019, OEP/CoP's helped people work together in following Jesus in many areas of concern:

Racial justice; gender justice; LGBTQ justice; environmental justice; prison justice; Palestine liberation; Peace Day organizing; interfaith peacemaking; preventing military recruitment of children; Kingian Nonviolence; and conflict transformation.

Pastors, community organizers, and other practitioners participated in such activities as:

• Basic and advanced training, seminars, and webinars in Kingian Nonviolence, including deep background studies and direct applications to their current lives and work.
• Coming together with families and others in our intergenerational annual Song & Story Fest, to share music, stories, crafts, outdoor activities, and social and spiritual renewal.

• Joining and helping to organize a series of local, regional, and national events in the new “Poor People’s Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival,” a renewal of the peace and justice movement begun by Martin Luther King, Jr. before his assassination.

• Sharing social media messages for the “Stop Recruiting Kids Campaign,” a nationwide movement to protect children and schools from military marketing and recruitment, and to build public support for opportunities besides the military for young people.

We welcome proposals for new CoP’s from individuals, churches, and groups. Please contact us at OEP@OnEarthPeace.org to share your areas of concern where Jesus is calling you.

Churches and Groups
OEP has always worked with the Church of the Brethren and its congregations, districts, other agencies, and auxiliaries. In 2019, we continued this work in a wide range of ways, including:

• Preparation of worship and educational resources, and participation in worship services, Sunday School classes, and other vital events in the life of the local church.

• Participation in Church of the Brethren annual and district conferences, youth and young adult conferences, retreats, workcamps, and special events and gatherings.

• Trainings and support for district Shalom Teams and similar workshops, and helping with third-party facilitation in cases of conflict within congregations and districts.

• Exploration with congregations and districts of a potential new congregational peace and justice health checkup program, as a path for church growth and revitalization.

• Organizing a wide range of celebrations, observances, and community projects for the International Day of Peace (9/21), which OEP has supported for more than a decade.

To invite our participation in a project or event for your church, district, community group, or other organization, please contact us at OEP@OnEarthPeace.org or (410) 635-8704.

Young People
Also from our beginning, OEP has followed a special calling to work with youth and young adults to help build and support leadership for justice and peace in each generation. Some of the ways we offer opportunities to develop skills, spiritual grounding, and mentorship include:
• Peace retreats where young people learn together about Jesus’ message of peace in an interactive and fun atmosphere, and address the challenging issues in their lives.

• Paid internships where young adults help advance our work and develop their skills and commitments for a lifetime of peacemaking, no matter what vocations they follow. In the first five years of this program, we have engaged more than sixty student interns.

• Leadership training in conflict transformation and nonviolent social change for school age youth in our Agape-Satyagraha program with site partners across the country, along with training of adult mentors and connecting youth with mentors in their community.

• Continuing support of the “Dunker Punks” community and podcast, where young adults explore what it means to follow the teachings of the “Sermon on the Mount” today.

• Workshops and trainings at youth conferences, church camps, workcamps, and other events, and through our Kids as Peacemakers mural project curriculum for children.

To engage your young people, please contact us at OEP@OnEarthPeace.org or (410) 635-8704.

ANTI-RACISM/ANTI-OPPRESSION (AR/AO)

On Earth Peace includes an Anti-Racism Transformation Team (ARIT) to help lead our journey toward the following 20-year vision and goal for our organization and community:

“On Earth Peace board, staff, practitioners, and programs are unapologetically multiracial/multicultural, driven by an anti-racist, anti-oppression lens toward the transformation of society.” (This is a long-term goal, we are not there yet!)

The ARIT focuses on seeing and changing how racism misshapes our ministries, both internally and in our program offerings. The ARIT has helped keep our commitment to sending every board and staff member to a 2-½-day basic training in “Analyzing & Understanding Systemic Racism” provided by Crossroads Antiracism Organizing & Training, and does critical work with our staff and board to help build AR/AO into our institutional practices and culture.

To learn more about the ARIT, please contact us at OEP@OnEarthPeace.org or (410) 635-8704.
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In addition to our full-time staff, On Earth Peace typically has an average of a dozen paid interns working as part-time contract staff on a wide range of important programs and projects.

OEP FINANCES

Financial Report for January 1, 2019, to December 31, 2019 (unaudited)

Our audited financial report is available on request

Income:
  Individuals (544)  $205,955
  Churches (155)  68,286
  Programs  7,845
  Endowments  25,867
  Other  5,958

Total  $313,911

Expenses:
  $489,138
Net Operating Loss:  (175,227)
Unrealized Gains:  $209,323
Net Revenue:  $34,096

On Earth Peace gives thanks for your faithful support and abundant generosity. Many individuals and churches continue to increase the portions of their giving to OEP. Where we need your help now is to find more people and churches like you, and to invite them into the work of OEP.

To learn more about our #DoveClub program for monthly donors and our new Legacy Society program for planned giving, to help secure our work at OEP for justice and peace in the coming years for new generations, please contact us at OEP@OnEarthPeace.org or (410) 635-8704.