



Church of the Brethren

Action Alert

Feb. 3, 2010

- 1. Brethren lunch to be a part of Ecumenical Advocacy Days on the issue of immigration.**
 - 2. International peace conference planned on issue of nuclear non-proliferation.**
 - 3. United Farm Workers initiates petition drive following harassment against farm worker.**
-

1. Brethren lunch to be a part of Ecumenical Advocacy Days on the issue of immigration.

“Peace Churches and Immigration” is the theme for a denominational lunch sponsored by the Washington (D.C.) area Church of the Brethren congregations on March 20, from 12 noon-2:30 p.m. The lunch will be hosted by Arlington (Va.) Church of the Brethren as a part of the annual event, Ecumenical Advocacy Days.

The lunch will feature a talk by Jeffery Carter, pastor of Manassas (Va.) Church of the Brethren, titled, “When Good Churches and Good People Speak Up.” In 2007 and 2008, Manassas City and Prince William County attracted national attention over decisions regarding immigration in northern Virginia. Carter led a coalition of clergy calling local civic leaders to work collaboratively with the community to embrace the city and county’s diversity. He was featured on NPR, WMAL, and received news coverage in the “Examiner,” the “Washington Post,” and the “Washington Times.”

Ecumenical Advocacy Days is a movement of the ecumenical Christian community, grounded in biblical witness and a shared tradition of justice, peace, and the integrity of creation. The goal--through worship, theological reflection, and opportunities for learning and witness--is to strengthen the Christian voice and mobilize for advocacy on a wide variety of US domestic and international policy issues.

Ecumenical Advocacy Days will be held March 19-22 in Washington, D.C. In 2010 the event is held on the theme, “A Place to Call Home: Immigrants, Refugees, and Displaced Peoples.” To register for the conference, visit www.advocacydays.org. For those interested in an alternative to a hotel stay, housing can be arranged in local Brethren homes. Young adult scholarships are available. For more information contact Jordan Blevins at jblevins@nccusa.org.

(Jordan Blevins contributed this announcement.)

Action idea: Plan to attend the Brethren luncheon, and/or the entire Ecumenical Advocacy Days.

Invite others from your congregation to join you in this opportunity to learn more and advocate for peace and justice surrounding immigration issues.

Action idea: If you are unable to attend the Ecumenical Advocacy Days, do some self-education on the target issues of immigration, refugees, and displaced peoples. Seek out information and resources from ecumenical Christian organizations who work on these issues regularly, including Church World Service (www.churchworldservice.org; click on “CWS in Action” to find the “Assisting Refugees” link), the National Council of Churches (www.nccusa.org; for the NCC’s most recent resolution and call to action on immigration go to www.nccusa.org/NCCpolicies/immigrationsresolution08.htm), the World Council of Churches (www.oikoumene.org; for resources from a 2007 theological meeting focused on migration, go to www.oikoumene.org/en/programmes/the-wcc-and-the-ecumenical-movement-in-the-21st-century/global-platform-for-theological-reflection-and-analysis/2007-reflection-on-migration.html).

2. International peace conference planned on issue of nuclear non-proliferation.

An International Peace Conference on the theme, “For a Nuclear-Free, Peaceful, Just, and Sustainable World,” and an accompanying International Day of Action are being planned by the campaign For Peace and Human Needs: Nuclear Disarmament Now. Events are to take place prior to the United Nations Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference in New York in May.

Several Christian and faith-based groups are represented on the long list of participating organizations. Among the great variety of peace groups, political groups, and professional groups are Quaker organizations including the Friends Committee on National Legislation, Pax Christi and Maryknoll, All Souls Church, and the Fellowship of Reconciliation, among others.

The International Peace Conference will take place April 30-May 1 at Riverside Church in New York City. “The conference will provide analysis and integrate campaigning for nuclear weapons abolition, peace, economic and human needs, and environmental sustainability,” according to an announcement shared by the United Methodist General Board of Church and Society. Three plenaries and a number of workshops are being planned.

The International Day of Action on May 2 will include a march across Manhattan, a rally, and a festival. Two of the main themes of the day will be nuclear weapons abolition and an end to the war in Afghanistan.

For more details, go to www.peaceandjusticenow.org.

Action Ideas: A petition drive seek signatures for a letter advocating the abolition of nuclear weapons. The letter is to be delivered to the White House and the United Nations at the time of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference in May. Find a link for the online petition drive at www.peaceandjusticenow.org.

3. United Farm Workers initiates petition drive following harassment against farm worker.

Global Mission Partnerships executive Jay Wittmeyer over the past weekend attended a meeting of the United Farm Workers (UFW), continuing a longterm relationship of the Church of the Brethren with issues relating to farm workers and labor justice.

The UFW is currently holding a petition drive regarding a case of sexual harassment against a young woman farmworker, and the retaliation that followed when the case was brought to light. The case involves a suit by the EEOC against Giumarra Vineyards for sexual harassment and retaliation.

“We need your help,” said an action alert from the UFW. “The US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has just filed suit against Giumarra Vineyards for allegedly violating federal law by sexually harassing a teenage female farm worker and retaliating against farm workers who came to her aid.

“According to the EEOC’s suit (EEOC v. Giumarra Vineyards Corporation, et al, Case No. 1:09-cv-022), the young woman ‘was subjected to sexual advances, sexually inappropriate touching and abusive and offensive sexual comments about the male sex organ by a male co-worker.’ The EEOC further alleged that after witnessing the sexual harassment, farm workers came to the aid of the teenage victim and complained to Giumarra Vineyards. The result? One day after reporting the incident, the victim and people who helped her were fired. The EEOC suit states they ‘were summarily discharged in retaliation for their opposition to the sexual harassment.’”

The alert also outlined previous labor issues involving the grower and its Nature’s Partner label, and included information about Giumarra Vineyards as the world’s largest table grape company.

Action idea: Find the UFW petition drive online at <http://action.ufw.org/page/s/eoc?source=web>.

For more information about the witness ministries of the Church of the Brethren, contact the Global Mission Partnerships Office:

Global Mission Partnerships
1451 Dundee Ave.
Elgin, IL 60120
mission@brethren.org
800-323-8039 ext. 230

[Unsubscribe from receiving email, or change your email preferences.](#)