



Satya

truthful in
thought, speech, and action

Yes! We Can Peace Builders *Holiday Newsletter 2022*

Yes We Can Peacebuilders is dedicated to promoting and teaching nonviolence, inspiring and engaging people to create a nonviolent community, nation and world.

"If you are unwilling to step into your true identity by participating in life for the good of all that lives, you miss the point of life."

Pat Walker - from *Voice in a Cloud*

ADVENT WAITING

By
Shawnee Baldwin

(A reflection upon the end of this election year)

Humans have been using violent solutions to disagreements since the time of Cain and Abel. Why would I expect, indeed hope, that it would be any different no matter who is holding or pulling the strings of our elected officials? Yes, I did breathe a sigh of relief that the red undertow did not sweep us all out to sea.

I'm still holding my breath for the latest run off and wondering how much longer we can support a system that comes down to one vote. Rather I would like to see a collegiate and collaborative spirit to benefit the common good of all humanity leading to the illusive "justice for all" of the Pledge of Allegiance.

Perhaps it is naivety or the season of Advent that gives me hope that we could eventually turn our violence and love of weapons into the scriptural plowshares (Isiah 2:4) to regenerate a sustainable and fertile ground to grow food without pesticides.

I have hope for an unarmed safe zone around the Zaporizhzhya nuclear plant in Ukraine and hope to stop the threat of a nuclear winter where nothing grows, and no one survives. I have hope that a previous president will be held accountable for trying to overthrow democracy and hope that we will stop state-sanctioned murder by lethal injection and rid ourselves of the

high cost of the death penalty.

This is not the first time in history where life has looked bleak. What is concerning is the deep-seated, unchecked racism and indifference that prevails with some of the outspoken, but ill-informed leaders of a white Christian nationalist worldview. What is concerning is the rash of shootings motivated by a leader's hate rhetoric and the reluctance of many to push forward gun reform and the banning of assault weapons.

Advent is a season of waiting to see what could be born if we are aware and willing to prepare for a peaceful world where we are all kin. Instead of the frenzy of gift buying and Santa, dig deeper into the Christmas story to recognize the underlying violence done to Mary who had to leave town to hide her "indiscretion." Think of the coldness of the innkeeper's denying her shelter. Think of the threat to all baby boys by the ruler's obsession to kill his threatened replacement. Yet we cling to the hope of a savior, to shepherds, and angels, and wise men bringing gifts. We gloss over the revolutionary prophet, Jesus as he dealt nonviolently in trying to overthrow corrupt religious leaders colluding with an oppressive empire.

Peace is not newsworthy. Peace is not glamorous. Peace is not profitable. Peace is not easy. But peace is possible, and it exists in pockets everywhere: movies, songs, novels, with comedians and in movements. It exists in the lives of saints and ordinary people making a difference for others. Peace is "Atarimae" - a concept of the Japanese world cup fans who cleaned up the stands after a match. It means "stating the obvious, normal, common." Yet most people don't get what these fans are doing nor does the world see the obvious advantage to peace. And still I cling to hope.

I am Advent waiting.

Upon receiving the Jean Hersholt Humanitarian Award Michael J. Fox concluded his acceptance speech on his work bringing awareness to Parkinson's disease when he said, "With gratitude, optimism is sustainable." He has a good idea of what is in store for him down the line. He does not know when or how, and still he hopes.

Advent waiting.

Michael Franti's song "Brighter Day" sums up hope for the quietly amassing group of peace pilgrims as we roll through another political season with new faces and old issues: "Don't give up, you just keep on fighting even when your eyes are crying, for a brighter day. Don't give up when your heart is weary, when voice is trembling, life needs mending, hurt is near you, when world seems broken...I'm still hoping with my heart wide open for a brighter day."

Maybe my head is in the sand but I'm still hoping that we reach a tipping point toward peaceful solutions to our disagreements. And I won't give up trying to make that a reality no matter who is in office.

Advent waiting.

Shawnee Baldwin writes with members of the Pace e Bene Writers Affinity Group
www.paceebene.org



World Human Rights Day - December 10

Today is World Human Rights Day celebrated annually on December 10th commemorating the day in 1948 when the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Two years later in 1950 the UN asked all countries to accept this day as World Human Rights Day.

The Declaration of Human Rights Day says that all individuals, regardless of their race, nationality, sex, religion, or any other status, are entitled to such things as the right to life and liberty, the right to work, the right to an education, the right to be free from slavery, and many more. There are 34 Articles of Human Rights.

We take most of these rights for granted but we should never forget that many people live in subjugation to unrighteous dictatorships, or languish in prisons throughout the world, or are deprived of the basic human needs for food and shelter.

This year's slogan for Human Rights Day is "Dignity, Freedom, and Justice for All." The fight for human rights and equality never ends.

INTERNATIONAL
HUMAN RIGHTS



Podcasts

People of Faith for Justice Presents Podcast with Author Emanuel Bell

None of us ever thinks that they, or anyone they know, will ever end up in jail or prison. But if life throws you a curveball and you find yourself, a family member, or friend incarcerated, wouldn't it be good to know all that awaits you behind those prison walls?

During his 17 ½ years in prison, Emanuel Bell hit a lot of bumps in the road. It took him 14 years to understand how to successfully do prison time and stay out of trouble. Emanuel attended a creative writing class at Solano Prison and learned how to successfully write a book; the result is the newly published "**How to Serve Prison Time Successfully**"—the title of this podcast—and it's a real inside look at prison life. In it, Emanuel details how to be

equipped with all the essential knowledge and tools needed to successfully do jail or prison time. This book teaches the proper way to live “cell life,” helping you to become a compatible, cool “celly” no matter who shares your cell.

Emanuel opens readers’ eyes to the inevitable situations faced in jail or prison, and offers tools to deal with anger, depression, and stress. He equips those serving prison time to properly handle the situation, keep pushing forward and get through any sentence. Emanuel hopes to convey the same prison knowledge that an inmate gains after serving years. Readers will become educated about prison life, even if they have never served a day.

In this Podcast People of Faith for Justice speaks with Emanuel to learn more about how he became an expert in prison life, how he survived it to be released after serving his time, and what he plans to do now that he’s a free man.

<https://pfjpodcast.libsyn.com/how-to-do-prison-time-successfully-with-author-emanuel-bell-025>

Link to Amazon for Emanuel Bell’s book *How to do Prison Time Successfully*

https://www.amazon.com/How-Do-Prison-Time-Successfully/dp/1735384534/ref=asc_df_1735384534/?tag=hyprod-20&linkCode=df0&hvadid=598289157286&hvpos=&hvnetw=g&hvrnd=9386525188523149904&hvpone=&hvptwo=&hvqmt=&hvdev=c&hvdvcmdl=&hvlocint=&hvlocphy=9031726&hvtargid=pla-1721578782379&pssc=1

Yes We Can Peacebuilders/Los Osos Cares Podcast on Dreamers (DACA)

Estella Vazquez knows what it’s like to be on the outside looking in. Vazquez who is the Program Coordinator at Cuesta College Monarch Dream Center in San Luis Obispo, California came to the United States as an immigrant. Now a citizen, at one time she too found herself dreaming of a secure and happy life, one where she could prosper and help others like herself. This is why she has spent the last 20 years working for immigration rights and especially for access to education for children of undocumented relatives.

In this Podcast Yes! We Can Peacebuilders and Los Osos Cares presents Estella Vazquez who informs us of the most recent DACA litigation sheet dated October 14, 2022 and explains what the DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) is all about and how it works. She discusses the application process, how the program keeps DACA students from deportation, offers work permits to students enabling them to earn a salary while studying, and more.

Vazquez tells us that DACA does not infer lawful immigration status, nor is there any appeal if it is denied. It can also be terminated at any time and most importantly, it is not a path to citizenship. However, Estella emphasizes that dream centers such as the one at Cuesta College and others at colleges and universities across the country have assistance available for applicants. She encourages DACA students to research the website FindYourAlly.com which offers free immigration legal services for students and to look at the Immigrant Legal Resource Center www.ilrc.org. California resources are Immigrants Rising at www.immigrantrising.org, United We Dream, and the President's Alliance on Higher Education and Immigration.

Link to Podcast with Estella Vazquez, Dreamer Coordinator at Monarch Center Cuesta College

Recorded November 2022

<https://soundcloud.com/ruth-ann-angus/podcast-with-estella-vazquez-11-17-22?>



Yes! We Can Peacebuilders, People of Faith for Justice, and Los Osos Cares wish all of you a Happy and Holy Holiday Season! See you in 2023!

"Nonviolence means avoiding injury to anything on earth in thought, word or deed." -- Mohandas Ghandi

On September 11, 2018, Yes We Can Peacebuilders accepted a proclamation of peace and nonviolence from the mayor and city council of Morro Bay, California establishing Morro Bay as a Nonviolent City. In September 2022 a second peace proclamation from the current mayor and city council was accepted by Peacebuilders strengthening the City of Morro Bay's dedication to peace and nonviolence through the Nonviolent City Project.

The Nonviolent City Project is a grassroots movement that organizes strategy for activists to work for the transformation of their community into a peaceful, nonviolent city. This is a shift in consciousness to work holistically with every sector of the city to establish a culture of peace.

**Yes We Can Peacebuilders offers workshops and training for adults and youth on ways nonviolence is fostered, defining nonviolence to aid in the development of nonviolent communication and strategies for change within ourselves and our community. You can learn more at:
www.yeswecanpeacebuilders.org or email us at
yeswecanpeacebuilders1@gmail.com.**



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