

# ...BRIEFLY

## Be Bold: Nonviolence Works

Vol. 77 Summer 2021 Annual Report Issue

[presbypeacefellowship.org](http://presbypeacefellowship.org) @presbypeace



### Guns into Gardens Starts Sept. 4

PPF's Gun Violence Prevention Working Group joins Lutherans, Episcopalians and Methodists across the nation in marking the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the NRA on Sept. 4 with a new ministry: removing unwanted guns from homes and communities and turning them into garden tools. **Swords into Plowshares - Guns into Gardens** launches in churches nationwide on Sat. Sept. 4.

"Churches can provide a pastoral and prophetic service by helping families dispose of guns and by challenging the NRA myth that we are safer with 'guns everywhere,'" says Deanna Hollas, Coordinator of the PPF Gun Violence Prevention Ministry. In June Hollas participated in the Guns into Gardens event held at Community United Church of Christ in Boulder, CO as a response to the March shooting that killed 10 at a nearby grocery store. Several Presbyterian congregations will launch Guns into Gardens on Sept. 4.

The project invites the community to bring unwanted guns, which skilled volunteers remove from vehicles and dismantle with a chopsaw. Others listen or pray with gun donors. Guns may have good or bad memories. It may be a gun that police returned to a family after it was used in a suicide or accident. It may be an inherited weapon that families don't want in a home with children. They may belong to older persons who no longer feel safe handling guns. Leftover gun parts are turned into garden tools by the nonprofit **RAWtools.org**

Is your church or presbytery interested? Please see:  
[presbypeacefellowship.org/gunsintogardens](http://presbypeacefellowship.org/gunsintogardens)



*Photos, Members of Community United Church of Christ in Boulder, CO received and dismantled several dozen unwanted guns in three hours on June 13, 2021*

### Start Now! Plans for GA 2022

The 2022 PCUSA General Assembly will be a hybrid of in-person committee meetings and online plenaries. There will be an extra emphasis on worship throughout, including a Juneteenth celebration on Sun. June 19. See all GA info on pages 2-3 and plan to participate.

PPF will create a strong witness for the issues of peace and justice in this hybrid GA. We need your ideas, creativity, generosity, help and determination to do that!

We are now seeking volunteers for PPF's GA Working Group. This group plans and coordinates PPF's Peace Breakfast, our GA outreach projects to commissioners and others, overture advocacy, interns and any direct action during GA. If you have ideas or you can help, please contact Timothy Wotring at [timothywotring@gmail.com](mailto:timothywotring@gmail.com)  
Special Thanks to Timothy for leading this team again!

GA will act on Divestment. Join the Working Group for PCUSA Divestment from Fossil Fuels by signing up at <https://tinyurl.com/4sdatp4s>. or contact Liv Thomas at [livthomas2512@gmail.com](mailto:livthomas2512@gmail.com)

### Barstow Driver Award for Excellence in Nonviolent Direct Action

**Presented to Cheryl and Douglas Hunt**

**Wed. Sept. 1 8pm ET & 5pm PT**

**Keynote Speaker: Kathryn Fleischer, Executive Director of Not My Generation,  
Young Adults Working to Prevent Gun Violence Join us! See p. 2**

## Our PPF Community



Since last year's annual report, several PPF community members have passed away, many from COVID. You will see them listed on pages 4-7.

These beloved include Dean Lewis, Andrew Carhartt, and Pat Brandenburg, all early supporters of Presbyterian peacemaking; PPF Activist Council members such as Sylvia Washer, gun violence prevention prophet Jim Atwood, Dick Symes who helped publish this newsletter and Diane Engster, wife of PPF leader Bill Yolton. Please tell us of others we have missed at [emily@presbypeacefellowship.org](mailto:emily@presbypeacefellowship.org)

We also lift up the life of Tom Driver, who passed away in July. Tom held pastors, students, colleagues, PPF and himself to the high standard of justice, standing against violence, whether it was racism or nuclear weapons or police brutality or failed US policies in Haiti.

PPF honors Tom and his wife Anne Barstow, *above*, with the annual Barstow Driver Award for Excellence in Nonviolent Direct Action in Retirement. Join us Sept. 1 as we celebrate new awardees, Cheryl and Doug Hunt.

As we move into the future, PPF extends a warm welcome to Lucy Waechter Webb as our new Manager of Communications and Digital Organizing. A former pastor, Lucy lives in northern Michigan. Thank you to PPFer Sarah Prager for helping as Interim Manager.

**BRIEFLY** is the newsletter of the

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## A Peacemaker's Calendar

**Aug. 6 & 9 Hiroshima and Nagasaki Days.**

**Aug. 16-23 In the Aftermath of Catastrophe.**

Presbyterian Peacemaking Program Travel Seminar to Puerto Rico, on the political, social and racial dynamics exposed by catastrophes and how the church responds.

**Wed. Sept. 1 Barstow Driver Award**

**8 PM ET & 5 PM PT**

**Online Global Celebration**

PPF honors **Cheryl and Doug Hunt** of Stockton, CA, activists for gun violence prevention, Colombia and more. As the NRA lifts up its witness for 150 years, PPF celebrates the witness of Cheryl and Doug Hunt, and all those like them, who envision a world where human safety is valued more than gun industry profits.

Join us in this spectacular gathering of the peacemakers on Wed. Sept. 1.

**This event is an important fundraiser for PPF,** with a special gift to Not My Generation.

Please donate and/or register at

[presbypeacefellowship.org/events](http://presbypeacefellowship.org/events)

**Sept. 4 PPF Guns into Gardens Begins Nationwide.**

See [presbypeacefellowship.org/gunsintogardens](http://presbypeacefellowship.org/gunsintogardens)

**Sept. 4 NRA 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration,** with

alternative events in Houston, TX for gun violence prevention. Watch for news soon.

**Sept. 24-Oct. 18 International Peacemakers Tour.**

In person and virtual, with global mission partners from Nigeria, S. Sudan, Fiji, Rwanda, Madagascar, Palestine, Mexico, Malawi, Cameroon, and Greece.

[presbyterianmission.org/ministries/peacemaking](http://presbyterianmission.org/ministries/peacemaking)

**Sun. Nov. 28 Keep Awake: A Call to Preach Palestine.**

PPF encourages pastors to "preach Palestine" on the first Sunday of Advent. Find sample sermons, music, art, litanies, prayers and more at [fosna.org/keepawake](http://fosna.org/keepawake)

**March 20-April 1, 2022 Mosaic of Peace 2022.**

Presbyterian Peacemaking Conference in Israel/Palestine, focusing on witnessing for peace and wholeness in a land called "holy." Register at [Presbyterianmission.org/ministries/peacemaking/travel\\_study/](http://presbyterianmission.org/ministries/peacemaking/travel_study/)

**June 18- July 9, 2022 225<sup>th</sup> General Assembly.**

Sat. June 18 Online Plenary Sessions 1,2,3

Sun. June 19 GA Juneteenth Worship Celebration

Mon. June 20 – Sat. July 2 GA Committees will meet in person in Louisville, KY for 3 days for each committee

Tues. July 5 – Sat. July 9 Online Plenary Sessions 4-17

# General Assembly 2022

by Marilyn White, Austin, Texas

With the new 225<sup>th</sup> GA format, how can PPF impact PCUSA policy? First, now is the time to ask your presbytery to nominate you as a GA commissioner. Second, the Office of the General Assembly is planning for how pre-recorded testimonies may be shared by the public and advocacy groups like PPF with committees. Stay tuned!

Finally, please help on overtures, new ones and the 2020 overtures that were referred to this GA. PPF sees several 2020 overtures that could be strengthened by support from more presbyteries. Many issues raised in these overtures have become more critical in the time they have gone unaddressed. To review all of the referred business, visit **pc-biz.org**, and search for all items for the event “224<sup>th</sup> General Assembly.” The referred items have numbers starting with “02.” These numbers will change as they are assigned to committees and moved to the 225<sup>th</sup> GA docket. If your presbytery has not yet concurred, your session can request that one or more of these be passed in an upcoming meeting. You can update them with additional rationale or rewrite to include new actions. Here are PPF’s suggestions for **Referred Overtures to Concur with or Update**:

**Fossil Fuel Divestment** - On Fossil Fuel Divestment, from Monmouth Presbytery (02-126) calls on the PC(USA) to divest from companies engaged in coal, oil, and gas exploration, extraction, and production.

## **Global Violence & Re-Imagining U.S. Foreign Policy:**

**A Call for Ending the Siege of Gaza and Collective Punishment of Innocent Palestinian and Israeli Citizens (02-116)**, from New Castle Presbytery, needs to be augmented to condemn continued U.S. complicity with and funding of Israeli military operations which target civilians and violate international law. **Promoting Peace with Justice with the Presbyterian Church of Colombia (02-004)**, from Seattle Presbytery, includes a well-deserved commendation of the work of our partner church (IPC) in promoting peace. More is now needed in light of the violent repression of peaceful protests and renewed calls from the IPC for prayer and solidarity.

**An Overture on Affirming the Effectiveness of Nonmilitary, Collaborative International Approaches to Resolving Conflict (02-015)**, from Mission Presbytery, would expand the discussion of the harm caused by the “Doctrine of Discovery” to Indigenous peoples to include U.S. foreign policy, which has been shaped by colonialism, militarism, and paternalistic assumptions. **On Declaring the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to Be a Sanctuary and Accompaniment Church (02-111)**, from San Jose Presbytery elevates care and advocacy for migrants fleeing violence as an essential Christian practice. **On Celebrating the 75th Anniversary of the United Nations (02-006)**, from Hudson River Presbytery needs to be updated for timeliness and resubmitted as an original overture.

**Gun Violence - Regarding Our Commitment to Gun Violence Prevention (02-025)**, from Chicago Presbytery, asks for an update to the 2010 policy. That process has already begun, but a new overture on gun violence is also timely.

If your session or presbytery acts on these or any overtures, please let PPF know at [info@presbypeace.org](mailto:info@presbypeace.org)

## Peace Church Working Group

by Ben Daniel, Montclair, CA

*“A Peace Church is a church that...recognizes that war and militarism are inconsistent with the Gospel of Christ that calls us to love our enemies and pray for those that persecute us...recognizes the harm that violence and war have done to soldiers and their families, to civilians, to the poor, to women and children, to society and to the environment ...supports those who have declared themselves to be Conscientious Objectors...is ready to take a stand and say no to violence and war in the name of the Prince of Peace.”*

---from *What is a Peace Church?* [presbypeacefellowship.org/peace-church](https://presbypeacefellowship.org/peace-church)

At some point, members of every congregation considering becoming a “peace church” must grapple with difficult questions, usually involving genocide, national defense, and respect for current and former members of the US military. Those questions can both reflect genuine curiosity—“What about the use of military force to prevent genocide? Without an active military, how does a sovereign nation defend itself?”—and also can be tinged with accusation—“Do you not *recognize* that your freedom to hate America was paid for in blood by the very brave men and women whose service you disrespect?”

PPF’s Peace Church Working Group has been attempting to address these and other questions. We’ve been drafting a set of Frequently Asked Questions (or, “FAQs”) for the PPF website and we’re preparing a peace **(cont. p. 8)**

# Presbyterian Peace Fellowship Annual Report

## 2020 Donors – *THANK YOU!*

# 2020

Dear Friends in PPF,

Welcome to our annual report. In a year when everything we knew was turned upside down, we are grateful for your readiness to support the work of the Presbyterian Peace Fellowship. With the pandemic, deep polarization, and the climate crises, it would be easy for us to fall into a scarcity mindset and hoard our resources. *But through God's abundant grace, a record 932 households made financial gifts to PPF in 2020.*

We welcome new donors. Hello, ND, OK, MS! We thank long time donors, with every single gift a sign of grace. We celebrate the legacy gift of over \$9,000 that came to PPF from Presbyterian Voices for Justice as they ended the current chapter of their ministry. We honor their witness among Presbyterians for five decades.

In the list of donors below, join us in giving thanks for the lives of those in our nation-wide community who have died. Just as our partners in Latin America call out the names of the saints, we mark them as "¡Presente!" In life and in death, we belong to God.

Thank you for your support for PPF. In Christ,

Rev. Emily S. Brewer, Executive Director, NY Rev. Jessie Light-Wells, Moderator, PPF Development Working Group, TX

***Thank you to each 2020 donor for your support —932 households giving together !***

***Please forgive and advise PPF on any mistakes or omissions. All 2021 donors will be included in next year's Annual Report.***



Emily and Jessie, still Zooming!

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**\*¡Presente!**

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**To learn about PPF's PeaceSeeking Church Network, contact Art Hunt [art@presbypeacefellowship.org](mailto:art@presbypeacefellowship.org)**



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### Annual Report Issue *Guns into Gardens* See p. 1



Above, Guns into Gardens Event at Oak Lawn  
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**Thank you, all!**

**Peace Church Cont.** ...church curriculum for use in congregations. Spoiler alert: Peace Churches aren't soft on genocide. No country—including our own—should be invaded. We respect every kind of service to one's country; we think non-military solutions and service are more faithful to the Gospel and more effective at achieving lasting peace.

In the process of drawing up our FAQs and developing our curriculum, we have relied upon the experiences of members of the Peace Church Working Group. Now we're interested to hear the questions that have come up as you and your communities have grappled with what it means to bear witness to the Principality of Peace that is the Kingdom of God. We'd like to join you in wrestling with these questions.

Surf over to the PPF website to read the FAQs at [presbypeacefellowship.org/peace-church](http://presbypeacefellowship.org/peace-church) and please check out the curriculum once it becomes available and let us know what you think. We value your feedback.