

## At 75 Years, PPF Thrives: New Programs & Future Plans

### Accompaniment Expands

On an April 10 conference call, the PPF Activist Council unanimously and enthusiastically approved sending accompaniers to Mexico in response to a request for accompaniment at the U.S./Mexico border. Welcoming Alison Wood of Tucson as PPF's new Accompaniment Coordinator, PPF takes a big step. We are responding to an urgent request by a faith-based shelter that provides hospitality to migrant families fleeing violence and poverty. Alison has already made one trip to the region.

The first teams of accompaniers on the border will come from the 150 people that PPF has trained for Colombia accompaniment. As with our 15 years of the Colombia Accompaniment Program, we will work in coordination with the PCUSA World Mission office.

A small group is working with Alison to send initial accompanier teams. This group will work to develop a relationship with the host community that is de-colonizing and that models meaningful solidarity. After an initial three months, we will evaluate and reflect on the accompaniment efforts with our partner community to determine if the project has been useful and together decide a path forward. The name and location of the group asking for help will be shared later. They have requested that all accompaniers hold a US passport.

At the same time, the Accompaniment Program continues in Colombia where the churches and human rights groups struggle to keep the Peace Accords on track. See p. 8. To explore accompaniment, contact Alison Wood at [alison@presbypeacefellowship.org](mailto:alison@presbypeacefellowship.org)

### Gun Violence Prevention

**The Good News:** The US House of Representatives has passed both HR 8 for Universal Background Checks and renewed the Violence Against Women Act with new provisions to curb gun violence by domestic partners.

**More Good News:** PPF welcomes Deanna Hollas of Dallas, TX as Coordinator of Gun Violence Prevention Ministries. Deanna will work with the PPF Gun Violence Prevention Working Group to encourage the Church at all levels to be informed and active in the work of gun violence prevention, to provide pastoral support for this ministry and to seek a spiritual response to violence. Her first goal is to recruit regional activists who will stay in touch by phone with area congregations that are working on gun violence prevention for mutual encouragement and sharing new study/action ideas. Reach Deanna at [deanna@presbypeacefellowship.org](mailto:deanna@presbypeacefellowship.org)

**The Bad News:** There is nothing so far to compel the U.S. Senate to vote on S. 42, their version of the universal background checks bill. Until both houses act and agree on a bill, it will not go to the president to sign.

It's up to ordinary Americans to create conditions in which their leaders have the spiritual and moral will to stand up to the NRA. Our next opportunity for action is:

### Gun Violence Awareness Days

**June 7 - 9, 2019**

**Wear Orange!**

**See Action Ideas on p. 6**

### PPF/Fossil Free PCUSA Delegation to Puerto Rico July 21-31

"We are still marching," says Rev. José González-Colón, one of the leaders of our 2018 walk to GA223, as he extended an invitation to a climate delegation in his home of Puerto Rico. Delegates will experience a widening perspective of climate justice and fossil fuel divestment in a range of intergenerational, secular, and sacred contexts.

We will provide a safe space for pastors and activists in San Juan to share about local environmental issues and we will learn how to integrate the human ecologies of Puerto Rican/ U.S. societies with the ecology of Puerto Rican land. Worship and daily life will follow the prayer disciplines of the 2018 Fossil Free PCUSA's walk to GA. Scholarships are available. Apply by May 1 at [presbypeacefellowship.org/events/pr-delegation-19/](http://presbypeacefellowship.org/events/pr-delegation-19/)

**The Presbytery  
of Boston Divests**

**from  
Fossil Fuels**



**What about your  
Presbytery? See p. 3**

PPFers  
joined in  
Ecumenical  
Advocacy  
Days,  
April 5-8,  
Washington  
DC

*Photo, right:*  
Barbara  
Clawson, NC  
*Photo, below:*  
Angela  
Williams, TX



PPF welcomes new  
staff in 2019:

Katie Blanchard for  
Communications;  
Deanna Hollas for  
Gun Violence  
Prevention;  
Alison Wood for  
Accompaniment.

We continue to be  
blessed by Emily  
Brewer, Executive  
Director; Christa  
Galvin for  
Finance/Administra-  
tion and Art Hunt,  
Deputy Director.

## A Peacemaker's Calendar

**May 1** Apply today for Puerto Rico Fossil Free PCUSA & PPF Delegation. See p.1. Questions? Contact abby mohaupt at [awmohaupt@gmail.com](mailto:awmohaupt@gmail.com)

**May 23 - 25** PPF General Assembly Overture Planning Retreat. Contact [emily@presbypeacefellowship.org](mailto:emily@presbypeacefellowship.org)  
**See Zoom call below:**

**May 24, 7:30 PM EST** During the Overture Planning Retreat, there will be a Zoom conference call for everyone interested in GA 2020 to review GA overture ideas and solicit input from across PPF. To sign up, contact: [emily@presbypeacefellowship.org](mailto:emily@presbypeacefellowship.org)

**June 7, 8, 9** Gun Violence Awareness Days  
See p. 6 for action ideas.

**July 21 - 31** Fossil Free PCUSA & PPF Climate Change Delegation to Puerto Rico. See p. 1. Follow along at the PPF Blog [presbypeacefellowship.org/blog/](https://presbypeacefellowship.org/blog/)

**Aug. 2019 TBA** PPF 75<sup>th</sup> Birthday Concert at First Presbyterian Church, Forest Hills, NYC. Stay Tuned! [presbypeacefellowship.org](https://presbypeacefellowship.org)

**Aug. 1 - 3** Big Tent Gathering PCUSA, Baltimore

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

**Aug. 6 - Aug. 9** Presbyterians for Earth Care Conference "Peace for the Earth: From the Bible to the Front Lines" See [presbyearthcare.org](https://presbyearthcare.org)

**Sept. 13 - Oct. 7** International Peacemakers Tour with global mission partners from S. Sudan, Costa Rica, Palestine, S. Korea, Russia, Cuba and many more. See [presbyterianmission.org/ministries/peacemaking](https://presbyterianmission.org/ministries/peacemaking)

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### Plan to Come!!!

**Sept. 26 - 28** PPF Activist Council Gathering, Baltimore, MD. Meet PPF activists from across the USA for networking, worship, training and planning for 2020 and GA 2020. Sign up at [presbypeacefellowship.org/ACfall19](https://presbypeacefellowship.org/ACfall19)

**Join the PPF Activist Council!** The ABCs of the Activist Council are: Affirm the nonviolence of Jesus, Be active in PPF, Contribute each year as generously as you are able.

**Oct. 11 - 14** PPF Colombia Accompaniment Training at Montreat, NC. Explore Accompaniment! Contact [colombia@presbypeacefellowship.org](mailto:colombia@presbypeacefellowship.org)

Barstow Driver Award Event –Fall 2019

**2020: June 20 - 27, 2020** General Assembly, Baltimore  
To be a Commissioner or Youth Advisory Delegate, talk to your Presbytery staff or Nominating Committee now. Most nominations are made in the summer and fall.



By abby mohaupt, PPF Activist Council and Moderator of Fossil Free PCUSA, El Granada, CA

**We give thanks!** Now the Presbytery of Boston joins the Presbytery of San Francisco as the first presbyteries to divest from fossil fuels. How about your presbytery?

## Ask Your Presbytery to Divest

1. Find a complete guide to presbytery and synod fossil fuel divestment at: [fossilfreepcusa.org/facts-action/divest-synods/](http://fossilfreepcusa.org/facts-action/divest-synods/)
2. Let us know at [forcreation@fossilfreepcusa.org](mailto:forcreation@fossilfreepcusa.org) if you start the process to divest. We want to help you in the process and celebrate your achievement. A digital version of this document is available here: [fossilfreepcusa.org/blog/asking-your-presbytery-to-divest](http://fossilfreepcusa.org/blog/asking-your-presbytery-to-divest)

3. Below is the language these first two presbyteries used. You can ask your presbytery to divest too.

### Presbytery of Boston:

*Refer to the Presbytery of Boston's Investment Sub-Committee a motion to place all investable assets with the Presbyterian Foundation's fossil-free funds (or equivalent alternative), with an eye to diversification of sectors and an eye to cost when possible, as a statement of our Christian calling to care for God's creation and the vulnerable people most affected by climate change. In making this shift, we are recognizing that by continuing to hold investments in the fossil-fuel companies that most egregiously contribute to the climate crisis, the PC(USA) is complicit in harming God's creation and "the least of these" who are disproportionately affected by climate change.*

### Presbytery of San Francisco:

*Motion in September 2018: Motion to divest from fossil fuels. (It was a motion made on the floor.)*

*Motion in Nov. 2018: Here was the follow up motion:*

*Refer to the Presbytery of San Francisco's Finance Property and Oversight Committee (FPOC) a motion to place all investable assets with the Presbyterian*

*Foundation's fossil-free funds, as a statement of our Christian calling to care for God's creation and the vulnerable people most affected by climate change.*

*The above motion is what the presbytery ultimately approved in spite of what FPOC recommended, which was: "Motion: The Finance and Property Oversight Committee (FPOC) recommends that the Presbytery of San Francisco Receive and Approve the following actions: Fossil Fuel Divestment Inquiry. FPOC will investigate the costs of financial divestment of fossil fuels from its portfolios, including investment income costs & management fees, and report back to the Feb. Presbytery meeting. Note: The MRTI letter from GA does not actually recommend divestment but recommends engagement for the time being with MRTI in investigating the impact of fossil fuels by vendors in our region (Chevron, others)." (FPOC approved of the different motion language).*

*Motion in Feb 2019: Fossil Fuel Divestment Conversation Approve: Meet again with Schultz Collings and the Presbytery Foundation to plan a fossil fuel/sustainable investment strategy to execute in the next few months, within the already implemented investment strategy approved by Presbytery. Invite the present Presbytery of San Francisco members who have already met to attend the presentations. Report final plans at the May presbytery meeting. FPOC recommended that the presbytery move as much of its investments as possible to the Fossil Free options.*

**Will your presbytery be the next witness for a fossil-free world? Contact: [forcreation@fossilfreepcusa.org](mailto:forcreation@fossilfreepcusa.org)**

## People of Faith for a Green New Deal

Excerpt from PPF Blog by Ashley Bair, Activist Council, St. Paul, MN

...The future is grim, and we have to make bold steps toward an earth that promotes the health and wellbeing of all of creation. It is our only hope for survival. It is the only thing that will provide a future for our young people.

This means we have to revitalize the economy, the housing market, our food systems, unionized labor, and community infrastructure alongside energy sources. We need a new national, social, industrial, economic mobilization that revolves around a clean world. The Green New Deal is, to me, the only solution that bears justice and equity against the forces that have claimed land and lives over decades for dollars. And we need solutions.

**It's now time for the church to remember that it, too, is a place for solutions....** With Christ we know that there is nothing that we can't restore, especially when we organize together as he told his disciples to do. Christ came to earth in the midst of a faith crisis to bring all that was on the brink of death back to life.... **We now have the call and the power to do the same.**

See full message at [presbypeacefellowship.org/blog/](http://presbypeacefellowship.org/blog/)

# Nuclear Weapons

## Can We Re-Engage Presbyterians for Preventing Nuclear War? Who Is In?

By Ralph Hutchison, Resource Person to Peacemaking  
Committee of the Presbytery of East TN &  
Coordinator, Oak Ridge Environmental Peace Alliance

Let's wake up! The Bulletin of Atomic Scientists' Doomsday Clock has, over the last seven years, moved steadily closer to midnight. The clock is a symbolic measurement of the threat of a nuclear war which, in 2019, would result in hundreds of millions of deaths followed by a nuclear winter that would cause global famine and the near extinction of humanity along with most other creatures.

In 2012, the clock stood at five minutes to midnight. In 2015, it moved to three minutes and in 2018 moved to two minutes to midnight. This is the first time since 1953 that it has been this close. It remains at two minutes to midnight today. Midnight is near-suicide for all.



There is no alarm bell on the Bulletin's clock graphic, but when the eminent expert panel of Atomic Scientists declares the world to be on the brink of an existential nuclear disaster, it should sound an alarm that awakens all of us who have been asleep since the Nuclear Freeze movement ended with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the peace movement in our churches moved on to other pressing issues.

Hitting the snooze button is not an option for the church of Jesus. It's time to put nuclear weapons back on our front burner. That was the message of the Overture that passed the 2018 General Assembly by unanimous consent. The Overture called for congregations to educate themselves about the nuclear threat, and for the church to prepare resources to that end.

It's not just the scary thought of a 3:00 a.m. launch tweet coming from the White House now; the trajectory toward doomsday predates the Trump presidency. As part of a devil's bargain to get Senate confirmation of the New START Treaty, President Obama agreed to a trillion dollar modernization of US nuclear forces—starting with new bomb production plants, which will produce new nuclear weapons that will be deployed on new missiles and submarines. The latest cost estimate is \$1.7 trillion over 30 years, not counting the environmental cost of dealing with the resulting contamination. Construction

has begun on a new, multi-billion dollar bomb plant in Oak Ridge, TN, called the Uranium Processing Facility.

The nuclear threat has awakened the Vatican—Pope Francis has issued a series of statements that have renounced the Catholic Church's provisional acceptance of deterrence and called for the complete abolition of nuclear weapons. This fall Pope Francis plans a pilgrimage to Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Around the globe, voices are being raised: in 2017, 122 nations passed a Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons at the United Nations. The United States and other nuclear weapons nations refused to participate in the Treaty negotiations or the vote. But the message is clear—we are being called to account for a nuclear policy that threatens not just our "enemies," but the entire planet. At some point later this year or early next, the Treaty will garner the necessary fifty ratifications and will enter into force, and, for the first time, all nuclear weapons will be illegal. The US will officially become an international outlaw—though we will not deign to recognize the authority of the UN.

In the 1980s, the US-Soviet Nuclear Freeze movement was led by people of faith. Since then, Presbyterians have been at the heart of the grassroots opposition to nuclear weapons production in Oak Ridge, TN. They drafted the GA overture and are anxious to collaborate with colleagues across the church and around the world.

The 2018 General Assembly overture is our wake-up call—we owe it to future generations and all creation to rid the world of the threat of nuclear annihilation.

## IDEAS:

### ---Study/Action Resources for Congregations

The Presbytery of East TN and the Oak Ridge Environmental Peace Alliance (OREPA) are working together to take steps to implement the directives included in the Overture on nuclear weapons that passed the GA last summer. We are talking with the Peacemaking Program in Louisville about providing resource materials that can be used by congregations and we are launching some pilot efforts in our own presbytery.

### --- Start a Peace Fellowship Working Group?

Who can join me and others from TN in a new PPF Working Group on Nuclear War? We need one special person who can moderate the group and keep it moving forward. A possible time to meet would be at the Activist Council meeting Sept. 26-28 in Baltimore. We must nurture a renewed effort across the church to address the threat of nuclear weapons and that will require the help of the Presbyterian Peace Fellowship, just as it provided on this issue decades ago.

Interested? Contact Ralph Hutchison  
865-776-5050 [orep@earthlink.net](mailto:orep@earthlink.net)



# Endowment 75 Campaign Begins

## *Legacy: Peace I Give Unto You*

### **PPF's Endowment 75 Campaign has started!**

**Why:** Because we are serious about peace. Marking 75 years of PPF, we join our financial resources together in defiance to violence. It is our mutual legacy of peace, in gratitude for the love and nonviolence of Jesus Christ.

**Goal:** \$500,000 which will grow the current PPF Endowment Fund to over \$1 million, providing significant funds for PPF's annual action budget in perpetuity.

**How:** In 2019, please make a tax-deductible pledge to Endowment 75 to be given over a 3 year period. Pledges of all amounts are needed, from \$75 to \$75,000. We add up! Remember that this is "extra mile giving" and that we need to keep up our regular support for PPF as well.

**When:** Pledge now through Oct. 1. Pledge packets have already started going out in batches by mail. We all will receive an invitation by late July to make a 3 year pledge toward Endowment 75. Start planning your pledge now.

**Please return all pledge cards  
by Oct. 1, 2019.**

Of course all later pledges are welcome!

**Pledge Payments:** You can spread your 3 year pledge over any of these years: 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022. Or you can make a one-time gift if you prefer.

**Celebrate 75 Years:** Watch for **PPF 75** birthday parties in your area and the **PPF 75** Concert to be held in early August at the First Presbyterian Church of Forest Hills, NYC. To host a birthday party, call 817-291-3952.

### **Endowment 75 Honorary Co-Chairs:**

Susan Andrews (MO)     Areta Crowell (CA)  
James E. Atwood (VA)     J. Barrie Shepherd (ME)

### **Endowment 75 Committee:**

Katie Blanchard (MN)     Bruce Gillette (NY)  
Emily Brewer (NY)     Art Hunt (CT)  
Allan Burton (AL)     Whitney Palmer (MD)  
Bill Coop (CO)     Melinda Thompson (DE)  
Christa Galvin (NJ)     Rick Ufford-Chase (NY)  
Chair: Jan Orr-Harter (TX)

We welcome more members! Contact JanOH4@aol.com

## **A FANTASY?**

From: A Peacemaker in the Year 2119

To: All the Members of the Presbyterian Peace Fellowship who were Alive in the Year 2019

Dear Friends in Christ,

I know that you are not still alive today, but my heart is full and I want to write to you in spirit. I will not share the particular disasters, but much of the violence that you feared for the future of the world has come to pass and is still with us. Among the nations that still function there is constant conflict, as well as among those individuals who see their personal survival as separate from the survival of our species.

So it is an amazing miracle that the work of peacemaking is also with us. This is why I write to you now: the peacemakers of my time thank you, the members of the Presbyterian Peace Fellowship who pooled your money together to create an endowment fund for peacemaking. Because PPF had divested from fossil fuels, when the great Exodus from oil and gas occurred, this endowment fund was one of the few investment vehicles in the United States to survive the economic catastrophe. The fund grew beyond anything you could have imagined. More importantly, the vision of those entrusted with using the funds for peacemaking grew even greater.

I want to thank you, who in 2019 made it possible for my community in 2119 to be among the 10,000 small towns around the remaining habitable world to receive a program grant from the Presbyterian Peace Fellowship Endowment Fund.

We use your gifts to hold weekly nonviolence celebrations. Each week, whenever there is a week without a killing in our town, we hold a free meal for all to come to celebrate the nonviolence of that week. This may seem like a small thing, but for us it has saved lives and helped us see that food, survival and hope depend on all of us solving our despair and our problems without killing each other, from one week to the next. We are on a nonviolence streak of 42 weeks. We know that the spirit of Jesus, still the Prince of Peace, sits with us at the tables. We know that you are there also. Thank you for caring about the future of peacemaking. We are doing our best. Love, the Peacemakers of 2119

**PS** PPF's Endowment Fund is still growing and it has plans to help fund the final disposal of nuclear weapons.



# Gun Violence Prevention Action Ideas:

**1. Plan Now for Fall Study Groups** for adults or youth. See PPF's Congregational Toolkit for 3 study options. [presbypeacefellowship.org/gun-violence/resources](http://presbypeacefellowship.org/gun-violence/resources)

## **2. Gun Violence Awareness Days June 7 - 9**



a. Find local June 7-9 events at [momsdemandaction.org](http://momsdemandaction.org)

b. **Wear Orange!** IDEA: Make an orange stole for your pastor/s to wear in worship.

Why do we wear orange?

Orange is a color of warning. It represents the value of human life, worn by hunters in the woods to prevent an accidental shooting. It says: "I do not want to be the next victim of gun violence." Let's all wear orange June 7-9.

## **3. Reach out to your Senators to support change.**

In January, 42 senators introduced S. 42, the Background Check Expansion Bill. We need nine more Senators to support this bill to expand the current background check system to include sales at gun shows.

Churches can provide a safe space to discuss solutions to gun violence. Have you considered inviting your U.S. Senator and/or their staff to visit with your church or presbytery on this issue? Sometimes a thoughtful meeting with Senate staff will have a long-term impact.

### **Dates when most Senators are in their home states:**

The last week of May, the first week of July, most of August, the first week of Sept., Sept. 30-Oct. 14 and on many weekends Senators meet with constituents.

### **Senators who are Presbyterians**

--from the PCUSA Office of Public Witness

[pcusa.org/washington](http://pcusa.org/washington)

Lamar Alexander (R-TN) Marsha Blackburn (R-TN)  
John Barrasso (R-WY) Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV)  
Tom Carper (D-DE) Chris Coons (D-DE)  
Steve Daines (R-MT) Mike Enzi (R-WY)  
Deb Fischer (R-NE) Jim Inhofe (R-OK) Rand Paul (R-KY)  
Richard Shelby (R-AL) Mark Warner (D-VA)

### **Sponsor a letter-writing table to reach your Senators**

To: The Honorable Senator (name)  
United States Senate  
Washington DC 20510

Dear Senator \_\_\_\_\_,

I'm writing to ask you *(or thank you)* to support S. 42 to expand background checks on gun sales. Here's why: *(share your reasons....)* Sincerely, *(name/address)*

More information on Background Checks:

[presbypeacefellowship.org/gun-violence/resources](http://presbypeacefellowship.org/gun-violence/resources)  
Need help? Contact Deanna Hollas or join the PPF GVP Working Group at [gvp@presbypeacefellowship.org](mailto:gvp@presbypeacefellowship.org)

# Act Now: "The Things that Make for Peace"

## Save US Funding for UN Agencies

By Dave Wiley, PPF Activist Council & VP of the Greater Lansing, MI United Nations Association

This is the moment we have feared: President Donald Trump, with anti-UN cheerleader John Bolton at his side, has proposed a strike to the heart of the United Nations and its work for children and mothers, refugees, health and nuclear control around the world in the FY20 budget request to Congress. US State Dept. funds are also cut.

President Trump proposes to Congress to:

--Eliminate all UNICEF funding for the health and welfare and immunizations of vulnerable children around the world. (The budget was \$339 million in FY18)!

--Eliminate all funding for the UN Environment, Food and Agriculture Programs, the UN Development Program, the UN Population Fund, the UN Office of the High Commission for Human Rights, and the Nuclear Agency!  
--Cut the World Health Organization almost 50% - even as the WHO battles a raging Ebola crisis in central Africa as well as Zika and Malaria!

---Cut UN Peacekeeping Operations: Even as the UN Secretary General Guterres warned in January that the UN only had cash on hand to fund two months of peacekeeping, the White House calls for additional cuts, \$415 million below what Congress enacted in the omnibus bill this last year. As of January 11, Guterres says, the United Nations faces a \$2 billion shortfall in UN Peacekeeping funding. Already, the UN has begun downsizing the Peacekeeping operations around the world even as the UN Security Council, on which the U.S. sits, recommends new missions to resolve conflicts.



THE  
UNITED NATIONS  
PEACE AND  
SECURITY  
SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT  
HUMAN  
RIGHTS  
HUMANITARIAN  
ASSISTANCE

## Contact Your Officials Now:

Encourage Congress to oppose the Trump cuts. Phone, write or email both of your senators and your member of the House to act in U.S. and world interests to support the budget for the State Dept. and the United Nations and its agencies such as UNICEF, the World Health Organization, Peacekeeping Operations and agriculture, food and environmental programs. These long-standing programs are the things that make for peace in the most desperate places in the world. We slash

this work at peril to those nations and to our own future security.

For more info, call Dave Wiley 517-332-0333

# 72 Delegates to Honduras Seek Roots of Mass Migration

By Roger Scott Powers,  
PPF Activist Council, Albuquerque, NM

In March I was part of a 72-person interfaith pilgrimage to Honduras to learn firsthand about the root causes of migration. I met other faith leaders and immigrant justice advocates who joined in a week of meetings with grassroots and religious partners in Honduras to better understand why thousands of citizens have fled the Central American nation at great risk to themselves.

The international, interfaith delegation — which included Catholics, Protestants, Jews and Buddhists — was co-sponsored by the Interfaith Movement for Human Integrity, SHARE El Salvador, Sisters of Mercy, and the Leadership Conference of Women Religious.



Honduras, which shares borders with Guatemala, El Salvador and Nicaragua, is one of the poorest countries in Latin America. As a delegation, we found Honduras to be a country of extreme economic inequality, widespread poverty and rampant corruption. We learned that wealth and power are concentrated in 12 families. Nearly 70 percent of Hondurans live in poverty.

Four Presbyterians were part of the delegation: Rev. Debra Avery, 1001 New Worshipping Communities Pastor of Justice House in Oakland, Calif.; Ruling Elder Mark

Coplan of St. John's Presbyterian Church in Berkeley, Calif.; Ruling Elder Stephanie Gee of Calvary Presbyterian Church in San Francisco; and myself, Rev. Roger Scott Powers, Pastor of St. Andrew Presbyterian Church in Albuquerque, N.M.

We met with poor communities being threatened with displacement by mining companies, hydroelectric projects, agribusiness, real estate developers and the tourism industry. Asked what message the Hondurans wanted delegates to take back to the U.S., the answer was always the same: Stop sending U.S. military and police aid to the Honduran government. "U.S. weapons are killing our women and children," one Honduran said. "We don't need more guns! We need hospitals and doctors. We need schools and teachers." Members of the delegation shared these concerns with the *chargé d'affaires* at the U.S. Embassy in Tegucigalpa and said they plan to communicate with members of Congress as well.

Even amid the great difficulties and challenges Honduras faces, we took hope in the strength and courage of the many Hondurans who, day in and day out, defend human rights, protect the environment, care for children and youth, empower women and promote alternatives to violence.

The dates of the delegation coincided with the 39th anniversary of the assassination of Monsignor Oscar Romero of El Salvador, who was a prophetic voice of justice for the poor. To mark the occasion, our entire delegation joined Hondurans in a theological forum, a cultural celebration, a "stations of the cross/crisis" procession and a Catholic Mass, all in honor of Romero, who is now revered by Catholics worldwide as Saint of the Americas.

To learn firsthand about the root causes of migration, consider joining the Central America Travel Study Seminar being organized by the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program. Participants in "Central American Migrant Trails: Exploring the Journeys to and from the United States and Why We Must Act" will visit El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras, February 17-28, 2020. Applications are due by October 1, 2019. For details, contact the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program [peacemaking@pcusa.org](mailto:peacemaking@pcusa.org) or call 888-728-7228 x 5805.



**Above left, Stations of the Cross**

**Left, Media Event at the U.S. Embassy**

**Photos: Mark Coplan**



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presbypeacefellowship.org  
@presbypeace

*How (in heaven's name) did a  
Presbyterian Peace group make it to*

**75?!!**

- a. Decently and in order
- b. By Keepin' On Keepin' On
- c. A miracle that proves  
the existence of God
- d. All of the above --- and YOU!

Happy 75<sup>th</sup> Birthday to PPF!

## Colombia Accompanier Report

By Stephen Minnema, Accompanier  
in Urabá with Jeff Hornbeck, March 2019

*Angustia y Zozobra.* These words were used in a report to the Presbytery of Urabá to describe feelings in the church about the current state of Colombia as its government backs away from implementing the peace accords and as assassinations of social leaders continue. The first word means anguish or anxiety. The second word is new to me and has a literal meaning of "capsize" and a metaphorical meaning of "worry." We are worried, it seems, that the ship we are on is going to sink. And, in this case, that means a return to violence that has racked this country for so long and caught so many in its crossfire.

**We have encountered these feelings in just about every conversation that has reached any depth. The Colombian people understand in their bones that you cannot build a lasting peace without justice.** We talked with a woman who described the loss of her father and of her family's ancestral lands in the violence of the mid-90s. "There is no justice here," she said with glistening eyes. "And that is what worries us." The morning after this conversation I happened to read Luke 18 on the importunate widow and the hard hearted judge. It occurred to me as I pondered this text that Jesus' context in first century Palestine has a lot in common with Colombia today. In both cases, the powerful square off against armed resistance (which they ultimately crush) and the poor, caught in the middle, lose. In such a context, what does it mean that Jesus tells a story in which he sides with a poor woman who will not let go of her demand for justice while the hard hearted judge could care less and only relents to stop her pestering?

Accompaniers join in Bible study and singing in the local churches. It is in contexts like this where people often talk about their hopes and anxieties for the future of Peace in Colombia. It certainly means, for one thing, **that Jesus would encourage the woman we talked with to keep pressing her case. And behind such urging is surely Jesus' confidence that the God he serves, and not the impenitent potentates who seem to be in charge, is the real Lord of history and will one day lift up the lowly and send the rich away empty.** But surely this passage also means that those who claim to follow Jesus will stand with those who suffer injustice and press their case with them.

The Presbyterians of Colombia have committed themselves to just such a stance and it is our privilege to witness it and even to join them in it. John Calvin is held in honor down here. I remember something he wrote in a commentary: **without anxiety hope does not come alive.** Perhaps the painful *zozobra* here can help us all to recover in a more vital way the sure hope of Jesus, not for a God who will give us peace in heaven but for a God who will bring justice to the earth.

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