

# ...BRIEFLY

## Be Bold: Nonviolence Works

Vol. 78 Spring 2022 General Assembly Edition

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GA Commissioners & Advisory Delegates, PCUSA Staff, Members & Friends, Join us Online!

For every General Assembly since the beginning of time, the Peace Fellowship's Peace Breakfast has been a vital (and early) hour in the GA schedule. With the Hybrid GA of 2022, please join us online for the

## Peace Breakfast for Dinner

... or The Peace Brinner!

**Sun. July 3 7pm ET**



**Keynote Speaker: Dr. Svitlana Romanko**  
**Ukrainian Environmental Lawyer**

*"We call on all governments to ban imports of Russian oil and gas, and on all banks to stop funding the fossil fuel industry forever. Fossil fuels are the bulwark of autocracy and the death of the natural world."*

**Register at [Bit.ly/peacebreakfast2022](https://bit.ly/peacebreakfast2022)**

**Please bring your Breakfast –Pancakes, Frittata, Cereal or what works for you!**

There will be learning, celebration, fellowship, a "Peace Trivia" Contest, General Assembly Updates & Inspiration from our Keynote Speaker and Peaceseeeker Award Recipients

Peaceseeeker Awards to  
be Presented to

**2021**

**Rev. Harry Eberts &  
Miranda Viscoli,  
Co-Presidents of New Mexicans  
to Prevent Gun Violence**

**2022**

**Rev. Bart Smith, Voting Rights  
Activist, Tucson, AZ**



## New!!

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY FACEBOOK GROUP:**

**Presbys following GA225**

Join us here for conversation and community before & during the 225<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (USA). Commissioners, Delegates, Presbyterians, and all Peace Fellowship community members welcome!

Will you help us invite people to join the conversation? Find us at **Presbys following GA 225** or at <https://bit.ly/ppf-GA225>

## Welcome!

Welcome to this General Assembly Edition. And a special welcome to GA Commissioners and Advisory Delegates. May you be blessed by your GA service.

Founded in 1944, the Presbyterian Peace Fellowship is an independent nation-wide community of Presbyterians who try to live out the example of Jesus to reduce war, violence and exploitation. Many of us first became involved in these issues as GA Commissioners and Advisory Delegates ourselves at past Assemblies.

This GA opens in a time of violence, from Ukraine to our own streets. To reflect together on our calling as peacemakers, please join us July 3 for the always amazing Peace Breakfast for Dinner. This online “Brinner” is a time to seek next steps and to celebrate all the Peaceseekers among us. For items to be acted on at GA, please see pages 3-4 for a short summary of the GA items on which we have particular experience.

Like others in the Presbyterian family, our group is in a time of transition. In April we said Godspeed and thank you to Rev. Emily Brewer, who has led us over the last nearly seven years, and welcome to our Interim Executive Director, Rev. David Ensign. See p. 7.

Gratitude is a good way to begin a GA season. Breathe deeply and give thanks to the One who gives peace.

**BRIEFLY** is the newsletter of the

**Presbyterian Peace Fellowship**

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**BRIEFLY** is funded entirely by gifts from our readers, members & friends.

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## A Peacemaker's Calendar

**May 31, 7PM ET** Pentecost Bible Study with writer/activist Shane Claiborne [presbypeacefellowship.org/events](http://presbypeacefellowship.org/events)

**June 2, 8PM ET** How to Preach Peace on the weekend of July 4 – Scripture Discussion Group. Register at [presbypeacefellowship.org/events](http://presbypeacefellowship.org/events)

**June 3-5 Gun Violence Awareness Sabbath.**

Wear Orange to Remember Victims. [wearorange.org](http://wearorange.org)

**June 11 National Guns to Gardens Safe Surrender Day.** Please pray for these visionary congregations:

First Presbyterian Church, Stockton, CA

Community of Grace Presbyterian Church, Sandy, UT

Weaving Home, Woodgate, NY

First & Franklin Presbyterian Church, Baltimore, MD

First Community United Church of Christ, Columbus, OH

Midvale Community Lutheran Church, Madison, WI

La Mesa Presbyterian Church, Albuquerque, NM

Church of the Covenant, Cleveland, OH

Grace Hope Presbyterian Church, Louisville, KY June 18

**June 18, 9am Meet-10am Start.** Poor People's & Low-Wage Workers' Assembly & Moral March on Washington and to the polls. See [poorpeoplescampaign.org/june18](http://poorpeoplescampaign.org/june18)

**June 18, 11am-2pm** Guns to Gardens Safe Surrender Event during General Assembly at Grace Hope Presbyterian Church, Louisville, KY. All are welcome.

**June 18- July 9 225<sup>th</sup> PCUSA General Assembly,** Hybrid virtual and live in Louisville, KY. [ga-pcusa.org](http://ga-pcusa.org)

**June 19, 11AM ET Juneteenth General Assembly Worship** led by Stated Clerk J. Herbert Nelson. The service will be livestreamed at [ga-pcusa.org](http://ga-pcusa.org)

**June 12, 8pm ET Abolition, Art & Testimony.** See [presbypeacefellowship.org/events](http://presbypeacefellowship.org/events)

**July 3, 7 PM ET Virtual PEACE BRINNER,** See p. 1. Register at [bit.ly/peacebreakfast2022](http://bit.ly/peacebreakfast2022)

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

**Sept.–Oct. 2 Season of Peace** and the Presbyterian Peace and Global Witness Special Offering [specialofferings.pcusa.org/offering/peace-global-witness/](http://specialofferings.pcusa.org/offering/peace-global-witness/)

**Sept. 16-Oct. 10 International Peacemakers Tour,** in person and virtual, with PCUSA global mission partners. Apply for a Peaceseeker to visit your area at [presbyterianmission.org/ministries/peacemaking](http://presbyterianmission.org/ministries/peacemaking)

**Nov. 6-18 Mosaic of Peace 2022**

Presbyterian Peacemaking Conference in Israel/Palestine, on witnessing for peace and wholeness in a land called “holy.” Learn more and apply by July 1 t [presbyterianmission.org/ministries/peacemaking/mosaic](http://presbyterianmission.org/ministries/peacemaking/mosaic)

# General Assembly Peacemaking Actions -by Marilyn White, Austin, TX

With the hybrid Assembly, view the live GA committees and the plenary sessions online at [ga-pcusa.org](http://ga-pcusa.org)

**Environmental Justice Committee - PPF SUPPORTS** the following items of business:

**[ENV-02] Investing in a Green Future: A Vision for a Renewed Creation – From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy;** sets a goal of 100% renewable energy in congregations, mid-councils and agencies in the PC(USA) by 2030, and outlines a robust agenda for climate justice advocacy.

**[ENV-07] On Fossil Fuel Divestment;** divests the PC(USA), The Presbyterian Foundation, the Board of Pensions, and the Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc. from the fossil fuel industry comprehensively, including stocks in companies engaged in coal, oil, and gas exploration, extraction, and production. This overture has concurrences from more presbyteries than any other overture on the docket of this GA!

**[ENV-08] On Declaring the Time Is Now to “Cherish Creation, Cut Carbon, and Speak Up”** directs that all investments of the PC(USA) be withdrawn from industries that contribute to the production of the two major greenhouse gasses (CO2 and methane); would effectively end our investment in the production and use of plastics.

**[ENV-10] Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) Response to 223rd General Assembly Directive on Environmental Policy;** directs divestment from Chevron, ExxonMobil, Marathon Petroleum, Phillips 66 & Valero Energy.

**[ENV-11] On Protecting the Diversity of Creation;** endorses the goal of protecting 30% of lands and waters by 2030, relying on Indigenous wisdom and leadership.

**Immigration Committee - PPF SUPPORTS** the following items of business:

**[IMM-06] On Declaring the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to Be a Sanctuary and Accompaniment Church;** creates official policy to urge congregations, mid councils, and members to support immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers.

**[IMM-09] A Resolution Supporting Immigration/Refugee Justice Work in the PC(USA);** authorizes the creation of a policy report to address continued justice concerns faced by those seeking to enter the US via the southern border.

**International Engagement Committee - PPF SUPPORTS** the following items of business:

**[INT-01] Affirming the Effectiveness of Nonmilitary, Collaborative International Approaches to Resolving Conflict;** asks that insights from the review of the Doctrine of Discovery be applied to US foreign and military history; that we reject the ideas of exceptionalism and unilateral power that lead to overuse of military force; affirms effectiveness of nonmilitary efforts and diplomacy; calls for consultation with church partners and impacted communities when making foreign policy.

**[INT-05] Seeking Hope Amid Despair in Central America;** prepared with input from many partners in the region, and describes the realities that have led to increased migration, often at great risk, to the U.S. southern border. The recommendations for mission partnerships, solidarity actions, and a new study guide are excellent.

**[INT-15] On Advocating for a Peace Agreement in the Korean Peninsula;** concerns the not-yet-ended Korean War, and endorses the “Korea Peace Appeal,” a signature campaign promoted by our church partners in Korea, urging the United States to negotiate a peace agreement to bring the Korean War to an official end after 70 years of hostilities.

**[INT-17] Afghanistan: A Time to Mend;** begins to name actions still needed to end our military involvement. The recommendation about refugees might **be amended to help them reach any nation where they have relatives or support instead of only NATO countries.** The final action may be the most important – to mourn all lives lost in all wars.

**Overtures on Israel-Palestine: [INT-02] On Recognition That Israel’s Laws, Policies, and Practices Constitute Apartheid Against the Palestinian People; [INT-10] A Call for Ending the Siege of Gaza and Collective Punishment of Innocent Palestinian and Israeli Citizens; and [INT-13] On Designating May 15 as the Palestinian Nakba Remembrance Day:** PPF adds its voice to those of the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) and the Racial Equity Advocacy Committee (REAC) in urging the G.A. to approve these items.

PPF encourages more discernment about these items of business:

**[INT-04] Jerusalem 3, 2, 1: Three Faiths, Two Peoples, and One Human Family;** provides a long statement of concern about Jerusalem. The report could have been enhanced by centering the actual voices and experiences of Jerusalem’s Palestinians. It commends groups working for peaceful coexistence but fails to issue a strong call for bold actions of solidarity and accompaniment to support this work. It supports the Leahy Law, linking foreign aid to human rights, but misses the opportunity to call for an immediate end to all military aid to Israel. **We encourage the committee to strengthen the recommendations of this report through amendments and re-writing.**

**[INT-16] Resolution on Sanctions**; calls for accountability on sanctions that may harm civilian populations, **but needs clarification**. The recommendation seems to make church agencies able to nullify GA approvals of sanctions without the action of a future GA. It doesn't address situations such as the Boycott Divestment Sanctions movement in Palestine, where affected communities ask for sanctions with willingness to absorb the impacts in order to achieve a greater justice.

**[INT-14] On Expanding Mission Engagement and Education with Eastern Europe**; requests more mission presence in Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine, including study tours. **PPF strongly supports the overture as written. We urge caution about amending it to include a statement on Ukraine** which goes beyond the peaceful nature of the original overture.

**Race and Gender Justice Committee - PPF SUPPORTS** the following items of business:

**[RGJ-04] A Resolution for Trans Women of Color**- Steps to end violation of Trans women of color in church and society.

**[RGJ-08] On Offering An Apology to African Americans for the Sin of Slavery and Its Legacy**; offers an apology on behalf of the PCUSA for the church's complicity in the system of slavery that built the United States; authorizes a curriculum and a litany of repentance; and commits to restorative justice/reparations.

**[RGJ-10] Resolution on Race, Reparative Justice, and the PCUSA**; among many steps, calls Mission Responsibility Through Investments (MRTI) to make antiracist policies a focus of corporate engagement.

**[RGJ-12] Report of the Special Committee on Racism Truth and Reconciliation**; authorizes a committee to explore and expose where white supremacy is embedded institutionally and foundationally in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The rationale to the report can serve as an excellent study guide on racism.

**[RGJ-13] Report from the Disparities Experienced by Black Women and Girls Task Force**; engages the entire church in many strategies to eradicate systemic violence against Black women and girls.

**Addressing Violence in the USA Committee - PPF SUPPORTS** the following items of business:

**[VIOL-01] Regarding Our Commitment to Gun Violence Prevention**; excellent overture referred from 2020. PPF suggests that this overture be answered by passing **[VIOL-07] Gun Violence Report and Recommendations** below.

**[VIOL-05] On Advocating for a Reduction in Firearm Violence**; A needed restatement of current PCUSA policy.

**[VIOL-07] Gun Violence Report and Recommendations**, Calls for a 10-year project, the Decade to End Gun Violence, for all levels of the church and new resources for congregations and pastors. Advocacy points include law enforcement reform, which might be expanded to endorse local community efforts for alternatives to armed policing where possible.

**[VIOL-08] On Living in Healthy Relationships Free of Violence and Coercion**; endorses the National Resource Center on Domestic Violence and Firearms' gun relinquishment protocol to remove guns from domestic abusers.

**[VIOL-09] On Commending and Recommending the Guns to Gardens Movement**; commends Guns to Gardens churches and asks all PCUSA congregations to discern whether they are also called to participate in this movement to dismantle unwanted guns and convert them to garden tools. Supported by PPF's Gun Violence Prevention Ministry.

PPF encourages more discernment about this item of business:

**[VIOL-04] On Encouraging Our Churches to Counter Polarization in Our Society**; calls for repentance for words spoken in disrespect, discernment in navigating pain and conflict, and respect in times of disagreements. While we value unity, we also know that faithful witness has included taking prophetic stances on issues that were highly polarized in their context (e.g. women's ordination, opposing popular wars, LGBTQIA+ affirmation, antiracist social action). **PPF recommends significant editorial attention to VIOL-04**, including a change of its thesis statement from "encouraging our churches to counter polarization" to "encouraging our churches to engage difference with intentionality and respect."

**General Assembly Mission Coordination Committee - PPF encourages careful discernment** on:

**[GA-MC-15] On Determining the Format for the 226th General Assembly (2024)**, requests a decision about the next GA, scheduled to be held in Salt Lake City. Options presented include online, in-person, or a hybrid format. PPF endorses a full in-person or a committee in-person option with time for meals and events hosted by church entities and affinity organizations. If there is no exhibit hall, provisions should be made for tabling or other resource-sharing opportunities.

**Theology, Worship, and Education Committee - PPF encourages careful discernment** about this item of business:

**[TWE-04] Regarding Worship Resources for Ministering to Veterans**; authorizes creation of worship resources and rituals for pastors and military chaplains to assist military personnel as they are sent for training, as they are deployed, as they return home, and as they separate from military service. We recognize the need for pastoral care and recognition for all of life's circumstances, but we are concerned that rituals that seem to bless the use of military force or power would be inappropriate for a church that proclaims love for enemies and promotes peacemaking as the believers' calling.

## Peaceseeker Award 2021 Harry Eberts & Miranda Viscoli



PPF visited with our 2021 Peaceseeker Award Recipients, Miranda Viscoli and Rev. Harry Eberts, Co-Presidents of New Mexicans to Prevent Gun Violence. Harry has served as a pastor for 38 years in Lake Forest, IL, Lyndhurst, OH and currently at First Presbyterian Church of Santa Fe, NM. Miranda is an art historian who suspended work on her PhD after the Sandy Hook school shooting to research, write about and take action on gun violence in New Mexico and the USA.

In our next issue, we'll visit with 2022 Peaceseeker Rev. Bart Smith, Voting Rights Activist in AZ

### PPF: How did New Mexicans to Prevent Gun Violence begin?

**Miranda:** It was Sandy Hook. I had kids close to that age. It was a life-changing moment for me. Finally, I said: well I can be heartbroken or I can do something about it. So I gathered with a small group of others in New Mexico. We knew nothing about guns. I didn't even know what the letters NRA stood for.

**Harry:** In Ohio I was part of a statewide gun violence prevention group. When I came to New Mexico, no one was working on this issue here. When Sandy Hook happened, we joined 17 other people in a prayer vigil. It grew from there.

**Miranda:** So we started. We knew so little. At first, no one in New Mexico wanted anything to do with us. New Mexico is a gun-loving state. It's a very NRA-beholden state. I will say that our small group has changed the culture in New Mexico for the better when it comes to gun violence prevention.



We started creating a multi-prong approach to this multi-faceted problem. We knew we had to work in different ways in order to build trust in both our urban and rural communities to even have a conversation. Our first step was working in schools with a national program called **The Student Pledge Against Gun Violence**. The pledge starts: "I will never bring a gun to school; I will never use a gun to settle a personal problem or dispute; I will use my influence with friends to keep them from using guns...." It's an amazing program where you work with youth leaders to help them create a gun violence prevention pledge event. Where the pledge is used, there has been a 54% reduction in youth bringing guns to school.

From there, we started another program, **Murals to End Gun Violence**, probably our greatest impact in schools. People said to us: there is no way that any school in New Mexico will let you do a gun violence prevention mural in their school. Harry and I don't like to take No for an answer. We said: We bet we can find *one*. Now we are on our 14<sup>th</sup> mural. For this project we hired a facilitator, Warren Montoya from Rezonate Art. He's Native from Santa Ana Pueblo. He's not only an amazing muralist, but he's also great at working with youth. The majority of youth who were getting involved with these murals are youth who either have been victims of gun violence, or know somebody they lost to gun violence, or they themselves committed gun violence, or both. The murals are a message of peace, a message of nonviolence and gun violence prevention that is preserved in that school, that the youth pass by every single day. So not only is it beautifying and strengthening that school community, but it's letting them know that their voice matters, their safety matters and their lives matter.



### PPF: You "Christened" Guns to Gardens. How did that start and how is it going?

**Harry:** Guns to Gardens started when someone said that gun buyback programs don't work. Someone else said, yes, they do work. In the face of a cultural view that gun buybacks don't work, we decided to give it a try. We were all jammed in my office. We thought of the words of Isaiah: swords into plowshares. Someone asked, how about *Guns to Gardens*? That was 2016. We had no clue how to do it, but Miranda knew Mike Martin at RAWtools in Colorado, and he had started doing it. We talked to people in New England who had done it. We built a relationship with the mayor and the police and it grew from there. We have many people in our group who make all this effective and fun. Guns to Gardens is not for the faint of heart. We had ours at the police station and the police kept out the NRA protestors. These folks stood outside with tears in their eyes as guns, one by one, were destroyed. It was a real lesson in how guns are religious idols in our country.

**Miranda:** We are so excited that Guns to Gardens is becoming a national movement. We have gotten a lot of new members since we started Guns to Gardens. We have dismantled 1,037 guns, of which 33% were semi-automatic and assault weapons. I myself have chop-sawed an AR-15 assault weapon.

**PPF: Harry, you said Guns to Gardens is *fun*. How is it fun?**



**Harry:** Because of the people involved and the people you meet who come to turn in guns. They are bringing all sorts of memories. They tell their stories. They are so relieved to be rid of the gun. People are getting something out of this ---relief is what people tell us. The gift cards they we give to thank them are often used for Thanksgiving dinner for these families. You feel good about the event. And you are helping your community. To me, that's fun.

**PPF: In Guns to Gardens you don't *buy* the gun. The owner stays while it is destroyed and then you thank them for donating the leftover parts with gift cards. How do you raise all the money for this and all your other programs?**

**Harry:** It's all donations. We have some nice grants. We have a board member who works hard on grants and direct mail letters. We are mostly volunteers. People want to be part of something that's working. And they give their support.

**Miranda:** The Frankel foundation gave us a grant to create a national program so that a new group would have every single thing they need to create a group like ours in their state. This program will let us do trainings with other groups, free of cost. They will have a Toolkit, a curriculum, everything they need, as well as being able to communicate with us in terms of problem solving as they go along the process. That's about to launch in a

few months. Our whole goal is to have people learn from our mistakes. We were making things up: this worked, that didn't. It is our gift to the movement so that people will have an easier time of it. It's hard work. Not only because gun violence is a difficult issue, but because most of the work for any nonprofit is minutiae and administrative hard work. The fun work is with youth.

**PPF: You have won on many state legislative items: background checks, domestic abuse orders and more.**

**Miranda:** The legislative process is the hardest thing we do. No one had ever attempted to pass gun violence prevention legislation in New Mexico before. We said to ourselves, "Let's start with something simple.... like closing the gun show loophole." That proves how naïve we were. We learned a lot. To get the attention of our elected officials, we would do student "die-ins." At one time we had 450 kids. We did it in the capitol rotunda where every elected official had to see it. The students were all in t-shirts with the name of someone killed in schools in our country. I saw tears in the eyes of many Republicans because it's a heartbreaking moment to see. Our youth are so scared, frightened and beyond confused as to why our elected officials are doing so little when it comes to their safety from gun violence. The youth also spoke. We trained them to do research and public speaking. Those youth were amazing. I think those youth are hugely responsible for changing the culture with our elected officials in New Mexico on the need for gun violence prevention.



**PPF: New Mexicans to Prevent Gun Violence is such a creative group, full of color and art and young people. What would you say to churches out there who want to do something about gun violence, but they are afraid?**

**Harry:** I would say: start somewhere. If you are interested in gun violence prevention, find out who else in the community is interested and team up with them. And go from there. That's how we started. It doesn't have to be big. All great movements start from the bottom up – from people saying We Can't Do This Anymore. I'm hoping that people find the groups like ours that are out there and begin to form a web across the country. Just start somewhere.

Learn more at [newmexicanstoppreventgunviolence.org](http://newmexicanstoppreventgunviolence.org)

Read the full interviews with Harry Eberts and Miranda Viscoli at [presbypeacefellowship.org/blog](http://presbypeacefellowship.org/blog)

Join us Sunday July 3 for the presentation of the Peaceseeker Awards at the Peace Breakfast for Dinner - "Brinner." See p. 1



**Thank you, Emily Brewer!**

The Peace Fellowship joins in thanking Rev. Emily Brewer for nearly seven years as our Executive Director. During that time, with Emily's brilliant leadership, we sent Accompaniers to Colombia & the US/Mexico border. We walked from Louisville to the General Assembly in St. Louis to call for divestment from fossil fuels. We launched a Gun Violence Prevention Ministry and much more. Emily led us through the pandemic with the creative "Peace Camp" that PPF offered online, *photo right*. She also cared for PPF pastorally as our fellowship lost several of its elders and founders. For each act of love and courage, Emily, we thank you! You will always be PRESENT with PPF.



## What I'm Hearing from PPF - by David Ensign, Interim Executive Director

A few days ago, my beloved texted me that she expected to get home around 4:30. I responded, "I'll be right here in my cozy little office ... bringing peace to a violent world." She texted back: "That goal represents job security."

One could read that as an expression of despair about the futility of the work, but I took it as affirmation of the community engaged in the work. PPF has been around for almost 80 years, and has been about the faithful work of studying, praying, and acting for peace through all of them.

Over the past several weeks, as your Interim Executive Director, I have spoken with many of you about your PPF stories, your hopes for the future, and your thoughts about what's next for us as an organization and as part of larger movements. See the Word Cloud, *below*, with some of your language. Several things are already clear from these conversations: The *fellowship* part of Presbyterian Peace Fellowship matters deeply, and we long to be together face-to-face, not just on screens. We share an anxious excitement about the structural changes we have committed to, and, in particular, how well they might help us be more clearly mission-focused, driven, and organized. And, our relationship with the larger Presbyterian church is complicated and in need of its own reformation.

PPF's abiding strength lies in the energy, intelligence, imagination, and love of members of the Activist Council. Collectively we share a rare combination of wisdom and imagination, coming from a membership that includes folks who found PPF during its opposition to the Vietnam War and others who came to PPF during divestment campaigns and other projects of recent years.

We will make key decisions in the coming months: what should PPF look like organizationally? What leadership and staff model best fits the values we articulated through the deep focus work and structural changes we have committed to? What ought we to pick up or lay down at this moment?

The challenge and opportunity of transition – both the staff leadership transition and the implementation of the structure working group changes – will be best met through that combination of wisdom and imagination. Over and over I have heard you say that power in PPF resides mostly in the people who show up to make decisions. We want to make sure that there are no barriers to the room – or Zoom – where it happens, as it were. Listening for indications of such barriers is part of why I'm trying to connect with as many PPF members as are willing to spend 45 minutes to an hour with me over the next six to eight weeks.

So visit me right here in my cozy little office, virtually or, if you're in metro DC, in person. Send me a note right now: [david@presbypeacefellowship.org](mailto:david@presbypeacefellowship.org)

Peace, David Ensign,  
Interim Executive Director





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## General Assembly Edition

Join the New Facebook Group:

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Share this newsletter!

## What's a Brinner?

Peace Breakfast for Dinner!

Sun. July 3 7pm ET

See page 1

## PPF Statement on Ukraine -- We Oppose All War

The Presbyterian Peace Fellowship calls for an immediate halt to the Russian invasion of Ukraine and a return to diplomatic talks. The Presbyterian Peace Fellowship opposes all war. We maintain that the nonviolent realism of Jesus is more compelling than the so-called realism that attempts to justify war by any party.

Here are some commitments we are trying to hold in this moment:

- Putin needs to pull his troops out – we join with the world in raising our voices.
- The folly of nuclear stockpiles is – once again – obvious and inescapable in the face of Putin's threat. We must end the proliferation of nuclear weapons and dismantle the nuclear weapons that do exist.
- We support war demonstrators, war resisters and conscientious objectors in Russia and in Ukraine as well. We also call upon Ukraine to allow everyone, including men ages 18 – 60, to leave Ukraine if they choose.
- This war highlights the direct link between the threat of war and fossil fuel dependence. We must end our reliance on fossil fuels, which destroy the planet, motivate armed conflict, and force people to become war and climate refugees.
- We must work to end the racism that is turning away Africans fleeing Ukraine at the Polish border.
- For lasting peace, we must address imperialism and militarism in all its forms, including by the US and NATO.
- We are in prayer and discernment about how to “operationalize” our commitment to nonviolence in this moment.

True peace requires those with power to give up that power. But we know that power is never relinquished willingly.

That's why we're so inspired by the widespread Ukrainian nonviolent resistance to the invasion, like an unarmed person blocking the road so tanks can't proceed. That's why we're inspired by the Russians who are protesting their government's actions at great personal risk and the Russian soldiers who are surrendering when they realize that they've been lied to and the Ukrainians do not want them there. That's why we're inspired by creative alternatives to fossil fuels, like the suggestion of using US resources to send electric heat pumps to Europe and undermine Russia's monopoly on oil and gas.

See [presbypeacefellowship.org/blog](http://presbypeacefellowship.org/blog) for the full statement, as well as “Nonviolent Resistance is the Only Thing that Will Ultimately Save Ukraine” by Bill Galvin, PPF Activist Council Member and Counseling Coordinator at the Center on Conscience & War