

Blessed Are the Peacemakers

Daniel L. Buttry

Read The Spirit Books

an imprint of
David Crumm Media, LLC
Canton, Michigan

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ISBN: 978-1-934879-23-8

Cover art and design by
Rick Nease
www.RickNeaseArt.com

Published By
Read The Spirit Books
an imprint of
David Crumm Media, LLC
42015 Ford Rd., Suite 234
Canton, Michigan, USA

For information about customized editions, bulk purchases or
permissions, contact David Crumm Media, LLC at info@David-CrummMedia.com

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Dedicated to

KEN SEHESTED, WATI AIER and Daniel Hunter

You have been wonderful friends and
companions
on the journey of peace.

You have taught me many things
and challenged me to excellence.

Together we've engaged in some special
peacemaking mischief!

Introduction: What Is a Peacemaker?

IN THESE PAGES, YOU will meet heroes.

The world is troubled now and has been troubled in many earlier eras. In these pages, you will meet men and women who were not afraid of the worst that humans can unleash through ignorance or ill will. Like all of us, the people in this book agonized over the tragedies they encountered in the world. Sometimes they were terrified, too, but ultimately their faith in a wide range of religious and ethical traditions won out in their lives. They summoned the courage to make peace. Depending on your own spiritual tradition, you might call many of these men and women saints.

What you will discover in this book is that their heroism did not depend on the qualities our popular culture celebrates in heroes. As a group, they were not exceptional in muscle, martial arts, great beauty or wealth. Their gifts lay in the way they communicated their love, hope and wisdom—through teaching, preaching, organizing, mediating and protesting. Some shared their great visions to move millions. Some communicated through music and the arts. Some gave their lives and were martyred in the pathway toward peace.

This book will inspire you to evaluate your own life, your own response to the world's troubles. But inspiration is not all you will experience.

In these pages, you will find world-famous names, including Gandhi, King, Tutu and Bono. You will rub shoulders with Nobel Peace Prize winners. But in most cases, you will be meeting men and women unknown to the larger world. Flip through the chapters. You won't recognize most names. For each King we celebrate standing on a mountaintop, there are thousands of nameless peacemakers changing the world. In reading this book, you will learn that generations of peace activists—each building on the work of others—have been circling the globe for many years. This book makes visible for the first time networks of peacemaking that are invisible to most people in our needy world. By reading their stories, you become a carrier of those stories and spread their light. You become a part of the unfolding network. As you read, you will find ideas in these pages about acting on your new wisdom.

These ideas are potent! In 2007 on the island of Trinidad, a 13-year-old girl had been reading about the life of Gandhi and decided to act on his teachings. Choc'late Allen was concerned about the high levels of urban violence around her, so she began 12-hour-a-day fasts at local libraries, reading books about peace aloud to children. Her actions drew widespread attention and soon she was traveling around the Caribbean, especially to urban centers such as Kingston, Jamaica, where her message reached thousands. Choc'late declared: "We have the power of making the right choices! We have the power of accepting responsibility for our action! We have the power of doing anything!"

So, brace yourself! Join me in these true stories—and this true journey. The world needs us.

The world needs you.

What is a peacemaker?

A peacemaker is not necessarily a "peacekeeper." Peacekeepers (except for the U.N. Peacekeepers) try to stay out of trouble. They keep the peace by not making any waves and not causing any disruptions. The white clergy in Birmingham urged the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. to be a peacekeeper—to stay out of

trouble. King responded in his *Letter from Birmingham Jail* that the trouble was already there in the society, not something created by those engaged in civil disobedience. Through entering nonviolently into a confrontation with a violent and unjust system, “We merely bring to the surface the hidden tension that is already alive. We bring it out in the open where it can be seen and dealt with.” A peacemaker is willing to wade into the trouble, into the conflict, even into the violence to transform the situation. The peacemaker goes into the war to forge peace rather than staying safely at the fringes hoping things get better someday.

What does a peacemaker need?

Two words: Inner strength. In the violent struggles viewers see every night on television, people need to be physically strong, but in nonviolent struggle, an inner strength is needed. And here is the good news: Anyone of any age, size or gender may find that inner strength.

King described the nonviolent army as open to anyone: “In the nonviolent army, there is room for everyone who wants to join up. There is no color distinction. There is no examination, no pledge, except that, as a soldier in the armies of violence one is expected to inspect his carbine and keep it clean, nonviolent soldiers are called upon to examine and burnish their greatest weapons—their heart, their conscience, their courage and their sense of justice.”

Gandhi said, “In nonviolence the masses have a weapon which enables a child, a woman, or even a decrepit old man to resist the mightiest government successfully. If your spirit is strong, mere lack of physical strength ceases to be a handicap.”

Where can peacemakers be found?

Peacemakers work at the highest levels of government—and deep in the almost-invisible grassroots. They are people who strive to overcome violence, bitterness and division wherever they live and work. Any one of us can become a peacemaker.

One such person is Joseph Githuku who lives in Kiambaa village in Kenya. His wife and four-year old son were killed in a massacre during ethnic and political violence in 2008. The church

in which they sought refuge was burned down on top of them. Githuku says, “I can forgive, but I cannot forget that they did bad things to me.” Githuku, an ethnic Kikuyu, lives in a predominately Kalenjin area. In spite of his own profound personal losses, he seeks to forge reconciliation doing what he can do. He packs a drum of anti-mosquito spray on his back and travels to his neighbors to help in malaria eradication. “We are trying to show them how to live together to make peace between the Kikuyus and the Kalenjins.” Joseph Githuku is a great example of someone who takes what he has at hand to make a substantive contribution to building peace.

Most peacemakers don’t begin with a grand vision. Like Joseph Githuku we each can see conflict around us in the world—and we are each marked by those conflicts. We can each act transformatively, taking what we have at hand, just as Mr. Githuku used his anti-mosquito spray for reconciliation. Each of us can act for good, for justice, for healing, for hope, for peace. It’s as simple as that.

Will you like all of these peacemakers?

No. Truth be told, some peacemakers can be obnoxious people to live with. Personality traits that make some people bold enough to stand up to repressive powers can intimidate the average person. Some prophets have clusters of traits that are hard to live with and work with if you are a family member or colleague.

Not all peacemakers are saints—and not all saints are saintly every day. Humans are frail and flawed. If you’ve read about the lives of recognized saints—perhaps St. Francis—then you know that even the greatest of saints don’t always have sweet personalities. The same is true of peacemakers. Sometimes grit, stubbornness and even anger motivate people to take on the entrenched forces that spawn violence. Peacemakers can force us to deal with conflicts we would rather avoid, problems we would prefer to sweep under the rug. They try hard to speak the truth and that can make us squirm under their challenge to make us act better than we often do.

I don't agree with everything that was done by every peacemaker in this book. Some of them made political decisions I don't like. Others shifted in their politics throughout their careers, perhaps because they changed, or their context changed, or both. Some people acted in one way while they were leaders in non-violent opposition movements, but then when they came into political power their values seemed to shift. I had to wrestle with whether to include some people in this listing, but in spite of my reservations there was something that nagged at me about how they worked for peace. If I was nagged about their witness, then I knew there was something in their life and work that was a challenge to me, something stretching me in my thinking and action.

At some point in their lives, each peacemaker in this book did something that simply will not let us go. Once we've encountered their stories, we must remember those great moments.

How are the peacemakers organized in this book?

The true stories of more than 60 peacemakers are organized in sections, based on one aspect of their genius, a particular gift or emphasis in their work that is relevant to us today. Most of these men and women cross categories.

King's story appears in a section on prophets and visionaries—but, of course, he was far more than that. He was a nonviolent activist, a theoretician and a martyr. The theoreticians are also practitioners. Most of the organizers are also nonviolent activists. As you read this book, you will see how these lives connect across all of the sections, but clustering these peacemakers around one aspect of their gifts helps us to see more clearly the wide range of ways people can engage in making peace.

The list of individuals in each category is not a ranking, rather a representation. Outstanding peacemakers have not been included in this book for a variety of reasons: Someone similar is already in the book; I've told the person's story in one of my other books; or I selected a story for the sake of balancing the range of examples. The range runs from household names to people you will meet for the first time in these pages. The range includes men and women,

young and old, people from around the world, people from different religious traditions.

Our popular culture is a terrible window into the real world. Judging by TV ratings and best sellers, our heroes are comic-book crusaders and contest winners, athletes and movie stars, crime-fighting cops and gun-toting warriors. By reading this book, you're entering a world of heroes who live by a different code. The good news is: You may never become a super hero or the star of a TV series, but anyone can follow the path toward peacemaking.

Helen Keller said, "Although the world is very full of suffering, it is also full of the overcoming of it." Peacemakers know the suffering of the world well, and sometimes they pay the price for their work with their own lives. But these peacemakers have found ways to overcome and transform conflict, violence and war. They have not limited themselves to the rules of the troubled world as they found it—but through courage and creativity they brought into being new kinds of communities, outposts of a new kind of world.

Wherever there is bad news there are people of good news, even if their stories are seldom told. As you read, start retelling these stories to family, friends, co-workers, neighbors. You'll be spreading this light and, even in those first steps, you'll be strengthening all of us for the work of making peace.

A Special International Ministries Edition Introduction:

Seeking Peace For Two Centuries—A Great Cloud Of Witnesses

By Daniel Buttry and Reid Trulson

“I repent of whatever expressions or acts of my past life may have cherished the war spirit, in myself or others. I repent that I have so long delayed to enter my protest against the practice of war, by some overt act—a measure, which appears to be, in the present state of things, the indispensable duty of every Christian, and I resolve, that hereafter I will endeavor to diffuse the sentiments of peace, as far as lies in my power.”

—Adoniram Judson to Massachusetts Peace Society, May 9, 1821

The Judsons: Pioneer Peacemaking Missionaries

On July 13, 1813 Adoniram and Ann Judson arrived in Burma, having sailed from Salem, Massachusetts as Congregationalist missionaries. Anticipating meeting the British Baptist missionaries William Carey, Joshua Marshman and William Ward in India, the Judsons studied scripture concerning baptism during their four-month ocean journey. In the process, their understanding of baptism changed, leading them to be immersed as believers by

Ward. Suddenly the Baptists in the United States discovered they had missionaries in Asia.

In 1814, Baptist delegates from eleven states and Washington, D.C. met in Philadelphia and organized the “Triennial Convention” (now known as American Baptist International Ministries) to support the Judsons and other missionaries who would follow in their footsteps. The following year, clergy and laypeople from a variety of denominations formed the Massachusetts Peace Society in Boston. After receiving several issues of the Society’s journal, *Friend of Peace*, Adoniram Judson sent a letter from Burma in 1821 to become a member. He wrote, “Since war has been universally advocated and applauded by nearly all classes of men, it appears to me (without intending to reflect on those whose views may be different) that it is not optional with any to remain neutral or silent on this great question.” He expressed the conviction that peace, Bible and missionary societies were “forming that three-fold cord, which will ultimately bind all the families of man in universal peace and love.”

Judson may have been acquainted with William Carey’s peace views published in an earlier issue of *Friend of Peace*. Carey had written, “The great things which God, by His Spirit, is doing in the United States, are truly astonishing, and call at once for the most grateful praises, and the most entire confidence in all His gracious promises. Among these things must be reckoned the missionary exertions now making; and the Peace Society lately established at New York, and other places; a society with whose object my heart most cordially coincides, and which must, through the Divine assistance, which will assuredly be granted, be finally successful in the accomplishment of its ultimate object.” Soon both Carey and Judson would have their convictions tested.

War broke out in 1824 between England and Burma leading the Burmese government to view all white foreigners with suspicion. Although they were Americans, Judson and fellow missionary Jonathan Price were seized as prisoners along with two Englishmen, a Scotsman, a Greek, two Armenians, and a Spaniard. Together they were thrown into the notorious “death-prison” in the capital

Ava where they were fettered with heavy leg irons during twenty-one long months of captivity. At times the prisoners were hung upside down with their shoulders touching the floor. Ann had to bring the food to sustain Judson and others amid their deplorable conditions.

When the British army captured Rangoon and advanced up the Irrawaddy River, the Ava prisoners were marched twelve miles to another prison outside of Aungbinle. The spouses of the imprisoned missionaries feared the men would be executed or even sacrificed for the hopes of a Burmese victory. Soon, however, the Burmese king realized he needed interpreters to negotiate a peace agreement. Judson was released from prison under guard and became one of the interpreters, helping to negotiate and draft the treaty that ended the war in February, 1826. With the ending of the war, Adoniram and Ann Judson continued their pioneering mission work.

Peacemaking in the Early Years of Baptist Missions

Judson was not alone in understanding peacemaking and nonviolence to be part of the overall witness for Jesus Christ. In 1782, thirty years before the Judsons departed from Salem, former slave George Liele had indentured himself to a British colonel to buy passage on a sailing ship to Jamaica. Thirty-two years before Baptists in the United States would organize to support mission, George Liele had independently become the first American Baptist foreign missionary. The Baptist movement that Liele launched in Jamaica would, by the 1840s, send more than 40 missionaries to Cameroon. In his missionary service, Liele sought to “live as nigh the Scriptures as we possibly can.” The covenant that Liele prepared for the first Baptist church in Jamaica included the provision, “We hold not to the shedding of blood...”

Other early Baptist missionaries and mission leaders held similar views. Born into a free black family in Exeter, NH, Thomas Paul became pastor of Boston’s Joy Street African Baptist Church and helped start New York City’s Abyssinian Baptist Church. In 1823, Paul sailed to Haiti where, for six months, he gave pioneer

missionary service under appointment from the Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Society. Paul had joined the Massachusetts Peace Society at least three years before Judson became a member.

Henry Holcombe, the pastor of Philadelphia's First Baptist Church was the first vice-president of the Baptist Board of Foreign Mission (the Board that the Triennial Convention established to oversee the daily work of the mission.) The year after Judson joined the Massachusetts Peace Society, Holcombe founded the Pennsylvania Peace Society. That same year Holcombe's published sermons on peacemaking sparked the organization of two auxiliary peace societies, one in Georgia and an African-American peace society in Philadelphia. Holcombe expanded his ideas in his 1823 book, *The Martial Christian's Manual*, which held that followers of Jesus must abandon all violence.

Howard Malcolm, a member of the Board, was a founder and later president of the American Peace Society (1828) which was formed from a merger of the Massachusetts, New York and other local peace societies. Malcom, the first person deputized by the Board to visit the Judsons and other missionaries in their work on location, sought to embody nonviolence in his personal actions. Traveling over 53,000 miles for two and a half years (1835-37), Malcom refused to carry weapons for self-defense. Seeing widespread lawlessness during his travels he observed, "We have scarcely a missionary family that has not been robbed." His one exception to traveling unarmed was made for the sake of others. "So much was said," he wrote, "by some my English friends in Rangoon, of the folly and danger of going unarmed, as I had hitherto done, and of the imputations that would be cast on *them*, if they suffered me to go in this manner, that I consented to borrow a pair of pistols and a bag of cartridges." Only once—when approaching some alligators—did he take out the pistols, only to discover that he had no bullets to fit the pistols.

Francis Wayland, a leading pastor, mission leader, president of Brown University and of the Triennial Convention, preached a sermon in 1823 entitled "The Moral Dignity of the Missionary Enterprise." The sermon, a strong defense of mission at a time of

growing anti-mission sentiment, was published, went through several printings, and became widely circulated in the United States and England. Wayland set forth a holistic understanding of mission. “Our design is radically to affect the temporal and eternal interests of the whole race of man,” he said. And among those “temporal interests” he included war. For Wayland, the issue was clear. “In practice,” he said, “the precepts of the gospel may be summed up in the single command, thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbor as thyself.” The work of mission must address the social realities of war and peace. “Our object will not have been accomplished till the tomahawk shall be buried forever, and the tree of peace spread its broad branches....” Twelve years later, Wayland published *The Elements of Moral Science* (1835) that became the leading ethics textbook in American universities and brought pacifism to the attention of readers around the world through its wide distribution and translation into numerous languages.

French-born Jean Casimir Rostan served his country in diplomatic service in Cuba from 1825-27. He then came to the United States for theological study after which he was appointed as the first American Baptist missionary to Europe (1832). Returning to Paris, Rostan resumed activity in the Society for Christian Morals which he co-founded in 1821. Rostan worked with others in the Society for the abolition of war and capital punishment, for prison reform and against the slave trade. Rostan’s mission service came to an abrupt end with his death from cholera in 1833.

Missionaries pursued the making of peace in varieties of ways. For instance, in North East India in 1876, Rev. E. W. Clark and fifteen Ao Naga families from the Dekha Haimong village moved a three-hour walk away to a nearby mountain crest to establish the new village of Molung. This village sought to order its life as followers of the Prince of Peace in several ways: the believers did not give offerings to propitiate the demons before building the village; the village abandoned warfare and committed itself to nonviolence; slavery was prohibited in the village; and religious liberty was established with “no law to make Christians.”

Peacemaking marked the work of missionaries with “just war” convictions as well as those that rejected all wars. Rev. Washington Irving Price was a Civil War veteran who had served in the Ohio Volunteer Infantry. As an American Baptist missionary among the Sgaw Karens in Burma, he wrote, “I believe that it was just as much my duty to aid and encourage the Karens to be loyal to the Government to which they and we are so deeply indebted, as it was my duty and privilege to give myself to the defense of my own loved native land at the time when her life was threatened.” Price reported in 1887 that he and other missionaries “have been forced to occupy the position of ‘go-between’ for their people and the Government. This brought to us a vast amount of labour and responsibility that does not, at first sight, seem to be germane to our legitimate work. But, not only was the peace and prosperity of the country at stake, but the lives and homes of the people for whom we labour, as well as our own lives and the property of the Mission were in peril. Under these circumstances we dared not refuse to do what we could.”

Missionaries also were “go-between” peacemakers between villages and within people groups. James S. Dennis’ book *Christian Missions and Social Progress* (1899) quoted Price’s report that “sectional feuds have almost entirely disappeared, and the brotherhood of the Karen race is recognized.” Fellow Burma missionary Josiah N. Cushing gave a similar report: “Blood-feuds have been very prevalent and deadly in the mountain communities. Villages that have become Christian have refused to keep up such feuds, and heathen villages with which they were at enmity have felt the influence, and allowed the feuds to lapse.”

Missionaries that worked locally to mediate between disputing parties found their actions mirrored by mission leaders such as “missionary kid” George Dana Boardman who advocated and worked for mediation between nations. Boardman was born in Burma and was the only surviving child of the Judsons’ missionary colleagues George Dana Boardman and his wife Sarah Hall Boardman. After George Boardman died in 1831, Sarah stayed in Burma, preaching in Karen jungle villages and supervising

mission schools, taking young George into the jungle with her on these mission journeys. In 1834 she married Adoniram Judson who had been widowed since 1826. George “the Younger,” now Judson’s stepson, would become the noted thirty-year pastor of Philadelphia’s First Baptist Church and a four-term President of the American Baptist Missionary Union

Boardman was a member of several peace societies and served as President of the Christian Arbitration and Peace Society. He advocated the establishment of a Peace Department to stand alongside the U.S. Army and Navy departments and sought to convince leaders that arbitration was a feasible option. “Within our own century,” he noted, “there have been seventy-six cases of successful international arbitration; to nearly one-half of which, I am proud to say, the United States has been a party.” In 1984 the idea advocated by Boardman in the 19th Century became a reality in the founding of the U.S. Institute of Peace by an act of the U.S. Congress.

Representing the Society in 1890, Boardman spoke about disarmament in Washington, D.C. before a gathering that included the Secretary of State, members of the Cabinet and Congress. He made his case in an 1890 pamphlet entitled *The Disarmament of Nations or Mankind One Body* that was distributed internationally. He was a participant in the 1899 Hague Convention called by Russian Tsar Nicholas II that attempted to ban bombing from the air, chemical warfare and the use of certain types of modern technology in war. The Convention successfully established the Permanent Court of Arbitration, the first global mechanism for the settlement of disputes between states. As of 2011, the United States and 112 other nations are members.

In 1922 following World War I, the Northern Baptist Convention (now American Baptist Churches/USA) adopted a “Resolution on the Abolition of War.” The Resolution, reaffirmed by the ABC General Board in 1987 and 1998, states:

We record our conviction that war as a method of settling international disputes is barbarous, wasteful and manifestly contrary to every

Christian ideal and teaching. We reaffirm our belief that our country should have its part in an association of nations for expressing our common humanity, adjusting difficulties and outlawing any nation that resorts to arms to further its own interests.

We earnestly petition our national government to participate with other nations in the International Court of Justice and to take whatever other steps may be necessary to secure such cooperation on the part of the peoples of the earth as will bring about a stabilizing of world conditions and permanently banish war.

During the 1940 Northern Baptist Convention annual meeting in Atlantic City, NJ, a number of delegates held a Peace Breakfast at the Hotel Madison where they formed the Baptist Pacifist Fellowship. Membership was open to those who would sign the following statement:

As I view my loyalty to the Person, Spirit and Teachings of Jesus Christ, my conscience commits me to His way of redemptive love; and compels me to refuse to participate in or give moral support to any war.

The Fellowship included the prominent mission leader, Dr. Kenneth Scott Latourette, noted Yale University historian of World Christian Mission and an American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS) Board member for more than twenty years. By the 1950s at least 15 American Baptist missionaries were also members.

World War II and Japan

One was Thomasine Allen who began her nearly 45 years of mission service in Japan in 1915. By 1938, “Tommy” Allen’s call to particularly serve the poor led her deep into rural Japanese life at Kuji, a community of farmers, fisherman and miners on Japan’s

northeast coast. Christians were unknown in the community, and the house available for her was considered to be haunted. Nevertheless Allen settled in and started a kindergarten to minister to families. When World War II began she chose to remain in ministry on location. She endured two years of internment in four different camps before she was released to the States in a 1943 exchange of prisoners. Her commitment to “be Christ” and to make peace in service to the Japanese people remained constant. In the U.S. she served the Japanese-Americans at the Tule Lake Relocation Center until her return to Japan in 1947 where her ministry at Kuji flourished. She started a Sunday School that met *daily* and became accredited as the Kuji Christian Center School. She started a clinic and a Baptist church that reached into nearby towns and villages by starting agricultural schools. After retirement in 1958 she remained active in the work of the center and in founding a junior college in 1970. She was twice given high awards by the Japanese government.

When the Japanese invaded the Philippines in December, 1941, twenty-one American Baptist missionaries were serving there. Ten missionaries and their children were taken prisoner and interned for the rest of the war in appallingly harsh conditions. They all survived the war. Eleven missionaries fled to the mountains in the interior of the island of Panay. They were sheltered by Filipino Baptist friends who risked their lives to provide refuge and hospitality in an isolated forest glen the missionaries called Hopevale. For 20 months they survived in their hiding place thanks to the courageous care of the Filipinos.

However, in December, 1943, a Japanese sweep of the area to discover foreigners resulted in their capture. The day after they were seized, the order was given to execute them all. The missionaries asked their captors for a time to pray, which was permitted. They formed a circle and prayed, sang a hymn and presented themselves to their executioners. One by one the adults were beheaded and the child was stabbed: Jennie Clare Adams, James and Charma Moore Covell, Dorothy Antionette Dowell, Signe Amelia Erickson, Frederick and Ruth Meyer, Francis and Gertrude Rose,

Erle and Louise Rounds and their son Erle Douglas Rounds. Their bodies were put into a bamboo house that was then burned.

Jennie Adams had written many poems about the life at Hopevale. One of the more powerful poems is “I am weary of war and the fighting.” The final verse of the poem reads:

*I am weary of war and the fighting,
The sound of the cannon and guns,
The droning of heavy bombers
Searching for mothers' sons.
There must be a better method,
A path we have failed to take
That would lead us out of chaos
Could we from our lethargy wake,
The pathway of love among nations,
Dispelling all hatred and pride,
The way that the Master taught us,
A way that has never been tried.*

The Covells had been missionaries in Japan in the 1930s. Jimmy Covell believed that participation in war in any circumstances was incompatible with the Christian faith. He engaged in a symbolic protest of wearing funeral black when students at the Kanto Gakuin school where he taught were required to participate in military maneuvers. He also refused to attend the ceremony when the Emperor's picture was hung at the school. His actions led to him being labeled an anti-war dissenter and dangerous. As the political situation between the U.S. and Japan deteriorated, the Covells were reassigned to the Philippines.

Peggy Covell, eldest daughter of Jimmy and Charma, was shocked and grieved as the news of the deaths of the missionaries reached the U.S. But she also knew her parents' love for the Japanese people and their rejection of war. With her skills in speaking Japanese she served as a social worker at a relocation center in Colorado where Japanese-Americans had been forcibly interned. There she shared about her parents' story even as she sought to meet the needs of people who had lost everything out

of American war hysteria and prejudice. The Japanese-Americans interned were deeply moved by her story and passed it along.

The story of Peggy Covell's loving service, despite her parents' martyrdom, reached the ears of a Japanese prisoner-of-war. After the war he returned and shared the story with Captain Mitsuo Fuchida who had led the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. That testimony prompted a quest by Fuchida to seek the source of such love and forgiveness in the pages of the Bible. Fuchida eventually became a Christian and an evangelist, completing an amazing circle of reconciliation.

On December 8, 1941, the day following the Pearl Harbor attack, William and Lucinda Axling, American Baptist missionaries who had served in Japan for 41 years, were placed under house arrest. They were confined to their second story apartment on the campus of Waseda University in Tokyo for nine months. After the American government moved the Japanese from the west coast of the United States into detention camps, Japan began reprisals on its resident foreigners. At this time the Japanese government moved the Axlings out of house arrest and placed them in separate men's and women's camps where they remained for almost two years. Throughout their confinement, the Axlings maintained a clear witness to Jesus and sought peace between Japan and the United States.

In 1954, nine years after the war ended between the United States and Japan, William and Lucinda Axling were granted an audience with the Emperor and Empress of Japan. The traditional court formality was set aside and the Axlings were able to talk openly with the royal couple about their faith and their desire for peace and reconciliation between Japan and the nations against which it had fought during World War II. The Emperor awarded William Axling the Second Order of Merit. This was the first time that this high honor was given to a non-Japanese person.

William and Nadine Hinchman went to Japan as missionaries shortly after World War II ended. Among his many missionary efforts Bill Hinchman planted the Tokyo Peace Church near Waseda University. He envisioned a congregation that had

peacemaking at the core of its Christian witness. When the church was fully established as a congregation their first acts were to establish sister congregations that spoke about reconciliation through Christ. One partnership was with a Baptist Church in the Soviet Union, bridging the divide of the Cold War. The other partnership was with a Korean Presbyterian church, humbly confronting the racism of Japanese toward Koreans as well as the damage Japanese militarism inflicted on Korea during the War. The Tokyo Peace Church also wanted to bear ecumenical witness through partnering with a Presbyterian congregation rather than relating only to other Baptists.

With a large student population, an elderly Japanese deacon stood strongly with Hinchman in making the peace witness for the church. As a young man the deacon had survived the fire bombing of Tokyo during the war. He described walking through the charred ruins of the city and being unable to help the dying who were pleading for water. As he walked those streets he committed himself to God to work for the rest of his life for peace and an end to war. That commitment was expressed in part through his leadership at the Tokyo Peace Church, training the rising generation for their own peace witness.

The Tokyo Peace Church now has long had a Japanese pastor. It has become a haven for immigrants to Japan fleeing violence from their homelands. They have supported global Baptist peace conferences and provided scholarships for participants coming from poor countries. The seed Bill Hinchman planted is bearing a rich harvest for peace far beyond his time of ministry.

Dr. LeRoy R. Allen and his wife Elsie, though not related to “Tommy” Allen, were members with her in the Baptist Pacifist Fellowship. Though appointed as American Baptist missionaries in 1942, their departure for active missionary service was delayed by the war. As a conscientious objector, LeRoy performed noncombatant service under appointment by the Medical Assignment and Procurement Board. He was posted in several U.S. locations and worked in part as a tuberculosis control officer. Within the U.S. Public Health Service he had gained rank equivalent to the

military rank of Colonel. Elsie had been born in India to missionary parents and grandparents. From 1950-52 Dr. Allen was Medical Director of the U.S. government's Special Technical and Economic Mission to Burma. They began their active mission service at Vellore Christian Medical Center in 1953. Whether under appointment of the government or the mission society, the Allens sought to live out Jesus' mission call that combined proclaiming peace and curing the sick (Luke 10:5,9).

William T. Randall was a teenager during World War II but traveled as a missionary to Okinawa to minister among the Japanese people. Dealing with his own earlier hatred of the Japanese during the war years he said, "I learned very acutely that to harbor revenge would only divide and separate." After ten years as a missionary, Randall became the pastor of the Futenma Baptist Church in Okinawa. In 2000 he published *Social Justice through Nonviolence in the 20th Century*, a book about Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr.

Connections at Home and Afar

Martin and Mabel England served as missionaries among the Kachin people of northern Burma, beginning in 1933. When the Japanese invaded Burma in the early days of World War II, the Englands escaped in a harrowing journey under Japanese attack. The riverboat they were on was sunk. They lost all their belongings but made it safely out of the country.

Back in the U.S. the Englands settled in Louisville, Kentucky where they met Clarence and Florence Jordan. As the two couples shared their vision of a lived-out faith together they conceived a dream for an intentional agricultural community in the U.S. South that was committed to racial reconciliation. They bought land outside Americus, Georgia and formed Koinonia Farm. When the Japanese retreated from Burma, the Englands returned to their mission work among the Kachins. Koinonia went on to have a huge impact for racial justice, inspiring people such as Jimmy Carter and Millard Fuller, the founder of Habitat for Humanity.

In Burma, both before and after the war, the Englands bore witness to the need for peace and economic justice. Martin England challenged people to the choice between “Jesus or the Chief,” the “Chief” representing the authority of earthly figures and the tendency to be loyal to one’s tribe while hating other tribes. England expanded this globally, challenging the tribalism of race and nation, especially as expressed in the domination of the wealthier countries such as his own United States. He wrote of the connection between peace and justice, “Whatever else may need doing, there can be no peace between a world half starved, half glutted, between a world that puzzles how to get enough to keep alive and a world in constant danger of suffocation from its surpluses.”

In 1953 Mabel’s failing health forced the Englands to return to the U.S. Martin joined the staff of the Ministers and Missionaries Benefit Board (MMBB). Besides his formal job to care for retired ministers and missionaries in the South, he was given the covert assignment of caring for people whose work in the civil rights movement put their lives and well-being at risk. He visited civil rights activists in jail and cared for people who were economically afflicted by the risks they took. One of those visits in 1963 was to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. after he had been arrested in Birmingham, Alabama (See Chapter 3). During the visit, King passed a written statement to England who immediately sent it to Dean Wright, MMBB’s Executive Director in New York. Wright had the statement published, and the world soon came to know it as the famous “Letter from a Birmingham Jail.” England also secured life insurance benefits for Dr. King through the MMBB. King was viewed as a high insurance risk and could obtain no coverage through regular providers, so this support proved to be an especially vital blessing to the King family following Dr. King’s assassination.

C. Conrad Browne was another early Baptist Pacifist Fellowship member and conscientious objector. From 1941-46 Browne did alternative civilian service in lieu of combat duty, working first in a forest service camp and then in 1945 as director of Baptist conscientious objector units under the American Baptist Home

Mission Society. After three and a half years with the YMCA in Chicago, Con and his wife Ora became part of the Koinonia Farm in Americus, GA. Con's service as Koinonia's "Work Coordinator" from 1949-63 gave him a curious range of tasks. He taught at the Interdenominational Theological Center, was a bookkeeper, oversaw the farm's chicken flock, designed several new buildings, ran the egg route, directed youth camps and preached. With fellow Koinonia residents, Con and Ora endured attacks by the Ku Klux Klan and others that included "bullets, bombs, beatings, burnings and a boycott." From 1963-71 Browne was president/director of Highlander Folk School in eastern Tennessee (see Chapter 25 about Myles Horton and Highlander Folk School). Fannie Lou Hamer, voting rights activist and civil rights leader in Mississippi, received training in Browne's first Highlander workshop.

Following service with Highlander, Con Browne was introduced to ABFMS by Jitsuo Morikawa as well suited to give missionary service in leadership development among poor rural minorities through grass-roots education and action. Browne believed that the resources for people's education and liberation lie within themselves. He noted that the educational philosophy of Paulo Freire as expressed in his book, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (See Chapter 14 about Paulo Freire) had been put into action years before at Koinonia Farm and Highlander Folk School. During his missionary service in the Philippines (1973-79), Browne led "problem-solving workshops" that helped local people discover empowerment to confront their challenges. Homesteaders organized to save their land from encroachers. Women organized to visit young people imprisoned in a stockade. Rural youth formed "modules" to visit churches and encourage other youth. Negrito families learned how to successfully petition the government for the preservation of their land and culture. And people came to faith in the process, one workshop resulting in the baptism of eighteen young men.

Misión por la Paz

The wars in Central America saw other ABFMS/IM missionaries rise to the fore in peacemaking witness. Gustavo Parajón and his wife Joan were missionaries in Nicaragua where Gustavo had been born. Gustavo was a medical doctor and in that capacity founded PROVADENIC, a system of health clinics throughout the country, especially in the under-served rural areas. He also served as the Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Managua. When a catastrophic earthquake devastated Managua in 1972 leaving over 10,000 dead, Parajón founded CEPAD as an ecumenical relief and development agency.

Following the fall of the Samoza dictatorship and the success of the Sandinista revolution in Nicaragua, civil war broke out. Various “Contra” insurgent groups, assisted by the United States, sought to overthrow the Sandinista government. Because of his willingness to work with the Sandinistas in meeting the needs of the Nicaraguan populace, Parajón was criticized by Christian conservatives in the U.S., and CEPAD was accused of being a Communist organization. CEPAD clinics were attacked by the Contras, and health workers were assassinated.

Parajón joined with a group of Nicaraguan Moravian Church leaders and the Mennonite John Paul Lederach (featured in Chapter 18) to form a group that mediated between the Sandinista government and indigenous Contra groups in eastern Nicaragua. After an extensive process of going back and forth between the two sides and hosting a series of direct talks, they succeeded in establishing the first cease-fire that eventually led to the comprehensive settlement of the wars in Central America.

Following the establishment of the Presidents’ Peace Plan mediated by Oscar Arias (see Chapter 42) Parajón was selected as a person-at-large trusted by all sides to be on the Nicaraguan National Reconciliation Commission. He worked to establish local reconciliation commissions that aided in the demobilization of soldiers from both sides. The local commissions helped ex-combatants return to their home communities where they sometimes lived next to their former enemies. Parajón established

the training procedures to equip the local reconciliation commissions for their work, often using the Bible as their only resource for how to find the ways to peace on the ground. His peacemaking work resulted in honors from the American Baptist Churches, the Baptist World Alliance and the Central American Parliament, among others. When Parajón received the distinguished Francisco Morazán medallion from the Central American Parliament both Sandinistas and former Contras gathered to honor him for his reconciliation work.

Ruth Mooney was a missionary in El Salvador while the civil war raged in that country. Her peacemaking work focused on grassroots education to empower people in the churches. Like Con Browne, she and her team based their teaching on the philosophy of Paulo Freire, developing Christian education materials that encouraged participation, critical thinking, and transformation. After the war they wrote Bible studies focusing on reconciliation, reconstruction, and conflict transformation. She continued her Christian education work in Cuba and then in Costa Rica where her team developed a peace curriculum of Bible studies, *Building a Culture of Peace in our Church, Neighborhood, Family, and Personal Life*, that was used in congregations throughout Latin America.

African Peacemaking

In 1997, shortly after the official apartheid regime ended, Charles and Sarah West went to South Africa to engage in missionary service that included extensive reconciliation work. The Wests were invited by the Baptist Convention of South Africa, a predominantly Black South African body. The South African Baptists were primarily divided along racial and cultural lines reflecting the divisions of the larger society. The decades of hurt, injustice, distance and anger from the apartheid years created a huge challenge to healing. For Charles West this was his call to get engaged in the name of Christ. As he wrote, “Striving to be a peacemaker, working towards binding the broken heart and

setting captives free from hatred and pain is hard work, but it is very much the mission of the church.”

After much delicate and difficult preliminary work a gathering was held in Colesberg, South Africa with disparate Baptist groups present. There was talking that sometimes erupted into shouting. Accusations were made. People cried. Eventually participants turned to soul-searching. Attitudes shifted, and apologies were extended. West was a participator and facilitator at the meetings. At one point all the scarring incidents of the past were recalled and written down on large sheets of paper hung around the meeting hall. Then the papers were rolled up and placed under the communion table. As the participants approached the table to partake of the Lord’s Supper they were asked to remove their shoes and step into someone else’s. As West recalls, “The cliché ‘walking a mile in someone else’s shoes’ is an age-old adage that touches on the power of looking at life through another’s view. The metaphor conjures images of shifting one’s perspective and allowing for a deeper understanding of even one’s enemies.” The foundations of reconciliation worked out at Colesberg eventually led to the formation of a unified Baptist witness in the country called The South Africa Baptist Association. The SABA included Black, mixed-race Colored, India-cultured, and both British and Dutch-cultured White South Africans.

West’s reconciliation work took him further afield as he was invited along with the Mennonite peacemaker Ron Kraybill to work in northeast India. Northeast India has been the scene of many different ethnic and political insurgencies. West and Kraybill led workshops and trained church leaders and community activists in Bible studies for how to deal in nonviolent creative ways with the violence throughout the region. West particularly focused on the story of Jacob and Esau, a story from Genesis of lies and deceit, unkind and unthinkable favoritism shown between brothers, and the unfair and unlawful taking and distribution of resources. It’s a story of murderous intent and long exile. Yet this ancient story climaxes with restitution offered for wrongs done. Forgiveness was extended despite the bitter conflict,

making reconciliation and embrace possible. In 2006 Charles and Sarah West moved to Zambia continuing their mission work with a strong passion for the ministry of reconciliation.

Many missionaries have been involved in theological education around the world. From 1999 to 2008 Virgil and Lynn Nelson taught at the Pastoral School in Kikongo in the Democratic Republic of Congo. In his various courses Virgil would work in teachings about dealing positively with conflict. As he approached the study on Acts 6, a conflict story in the early church over the uneven distribution of food, Virgil tackled a perennial conflict at the Pastoral School. Every year at Christmas a gift of bags of rice were provided for faculty, staff and students. The students always felt they were short-changed. Nelson got permission from the school director to turn this into a teaching moment and give the students the responsibility of handling the distribution. The result was a long, in-depth discussion about determining and meeting need. Through this and other teaching experiences Nelson enabled leaders to go back to their home communities and deal positively with family, church and clan disputes.

After retiring from International Ministries Virgil and Lynn Nelson joined with Evelyn Hanemann of the Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America to do a series of church-based trainings in Liberia in the fall of 2011. They conducted workshops on nonviolence, on responding to trauma in ways that bring healing, and on empowering people for action. The focus for these programs was on Liberia holding a presidential election free of violence, a major step in rebuilding the country after two decades of civil war. The Liberian Council of Churches and their international peacemaking friends rejoiced when the election was relatively trouble-free.

Peacemaking into the 21st Century

International Ministries entered the 21st Century with its Board adopting a “Go Global” strategic plan that identified “working toward God’s Reign of justice, peace and abundant life” as integral to its mission. The Board declared that Christ-like mission included a commitment to “pursue peace, justice and

reconciliation through ministries of conflict transformation and education, as well as standing with and serving the victims of conflict.” International Ministries is continuing a ministry focus of “seeking peace and providing refuge.”

As part of the “Go Global” plan, International Ministries called “global consultants” to work around the world in short-term projects in various areas of mission expertise. In 1986, Lauran Bethell was preparing to teach English in a Christian school in Thailand and was studying the Thai language when her calling took a major change in direction. She had to pass through a large, notorious red light district in Bangkok where she saw women working in the degradation of the sex trades. She joined with Paul and Elaine Lewis to establish the New Life Center for girls at risk of labor and sexual exploitation. Lauran became the first Director of this residential program to provide literacy, vocational training, and Christian education for the girls. She also facilitated rescues of numerous girls from prostitution and other forms of exploitative labor. The program drew international attention for its excellent impact, including from the TV program “60 Minutes,” and visits from U.S. First Lady Hillary Clinton and Secretary of State Madeline Albright, among many other prominent officials. The New Life Center was also given an award for its exemplary service by the Prime Minister of Thailand.

As Bethell responded to calls from other countries to share what she was doing, she learned more about the growing global problem of human trafficking. In 2001 she became one of IM’s first global consultants and moved to Prague, Czech Republic. Three years later she initiated “Project Hope” in Prague, working with Bulgarian Roma women involved in prostitution, many of whom had been trafficked. Gradually she developed an international network to support anti-trafficking activists and ministries to the victims of prostitution. Bethell has been like a 21st Century Thomas Clarkson (see Chapter 31) in her efforts to end this scourge of modern slavery. Eventually she moved to Amsterdam, from where she continues to travel around the world supporting the development of local initiatives for freedom and healing as

well as coordinating the international anti-trafficking network. In 2005 Luran Bethell received the Baptist World Alliance's Congress Human Rights Award, presented by former U.S. President Jimmy Carter, for her advocacy for the victims of human trafficking. IM now has many missionaries who work in various countries with ministries to people in prostitution and to victims of human trafficking in varied settings of abusive labor.

Dan Buttry was commissioned in 2003 to be a global consultant for peace and justice after years of peacemaking work as a pastor with National Ministries (now the American Baptist Home Mission Societies), and the Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America. He has travelled to many conflicted countries to provide training in conflict transformation, equipping peacemakers with Bible-based tools for their reconciling work. One of the areas where he has worked most extensively has been northeast India. Buttry teamed up with Wati Aier and other peacemakers to facilitate the Naga reconciliation project (see Chapter 44). During many of those talks, John Sundquist also participated in the mediation team, both when he was Executive Director of International Ministries and later during his retirement when he continued his mission service as a volunteer. Buttry has had a special emphasis in inter-religious peacemaking, whether in situations of religious persecution or inter-communal violence that erupts along religious lines. This inter-religious peacemaking has taken him to India, the Philippines, Indonesia, Lebanon, the Republic of Georgia, Liberia, Kenya and other countries to help Christians live out Jesus' command to love one's enemies and pray for those who persecute them.

Two hundred years after the Judsons sailed to Burma, missionaries with International Ministries continue their work for peace, justice, freedom and human rights as part of their calling to serve God as the "hands and feet" of Jesus as the Spirit continues to transform the world. There are many stories yet untold. There are many stories of peacemaking creativity and courage by the people in the national churches with which IM partners. There are new missionaries stepping forth who are carrying out various

peace ministries as Christ's ambassadors for reconciliation. Echoing the scriptural recognition that "all of us make many mistakes" (James 3:2), "Go Global" renounced the temptation towards mission triumphalism: "We confess that we have not always lived up to our ideals but daily recommit ourselves to them." So International Ministries enters its third century of mission aware that its efforts to seek peace have been, and continue to be, imperfect and incomplete but believing that the future of peacemaking is, as in the words of Adoniram Judson, "as bright as the promises of God."

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