

New World Outlook

THE MISSION MAGAZINE OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2002

Peace is important to me...
I worry when there is not peace.

If there were peace they would not shoot each other

...people should not fight.
They should get together
with each other.

There would be no hungry
children, no barefoot children.

We can have peace if we help each other...

They should have love for each other
...then they will have happiness.

When they have nothing,
I would give them something ...

A LITTLE CHILD SHALL LEAD THEM

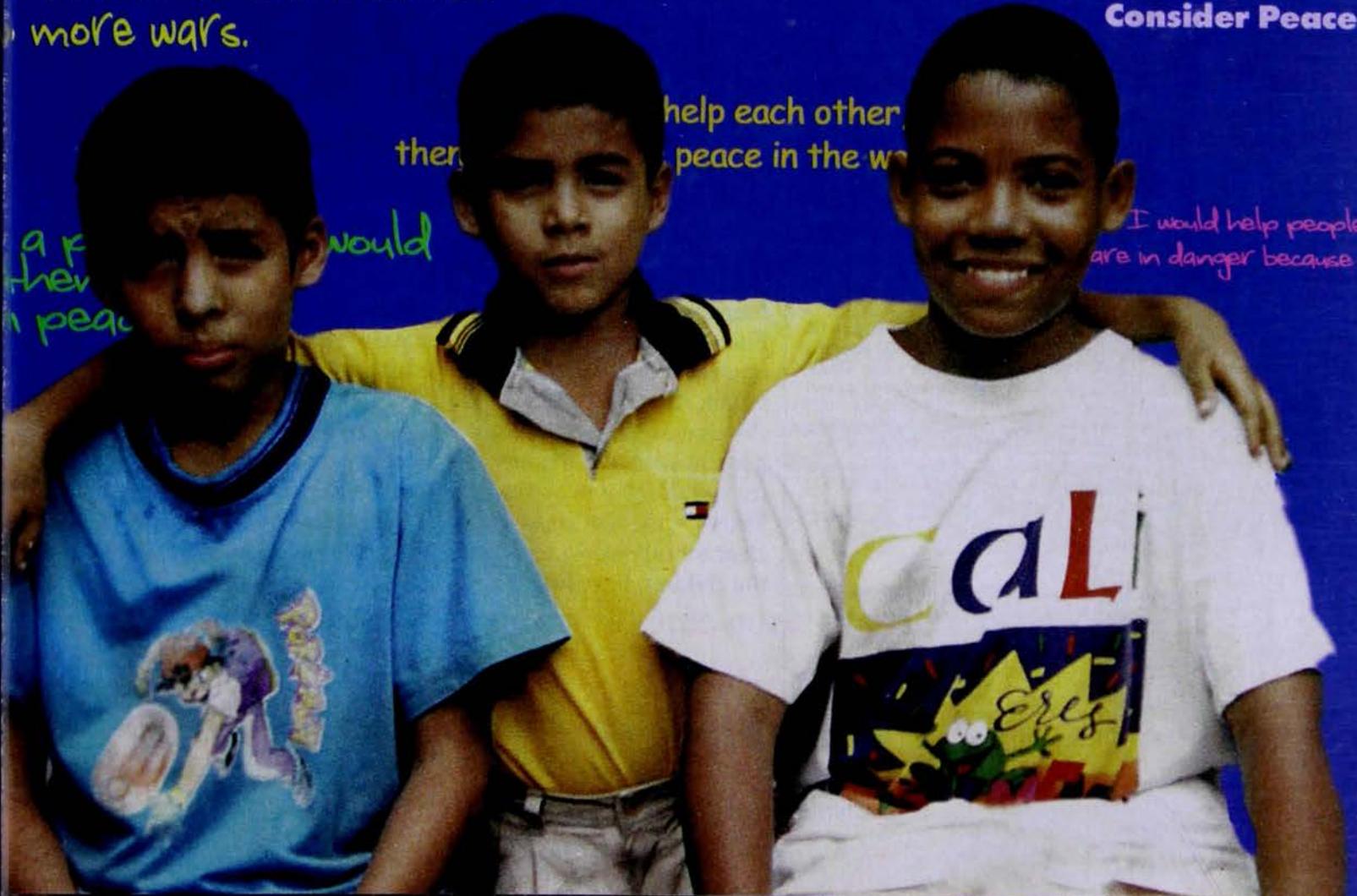
Children Around
the World
Consider Peace

...to have peace, people should
unite ... so there will be
no more wars.

help each other
then there will be peace in the world

...I would
help people
who are in danger because of war

I would help people
who are in danger because of war



NEW WORLD OUTLOOK

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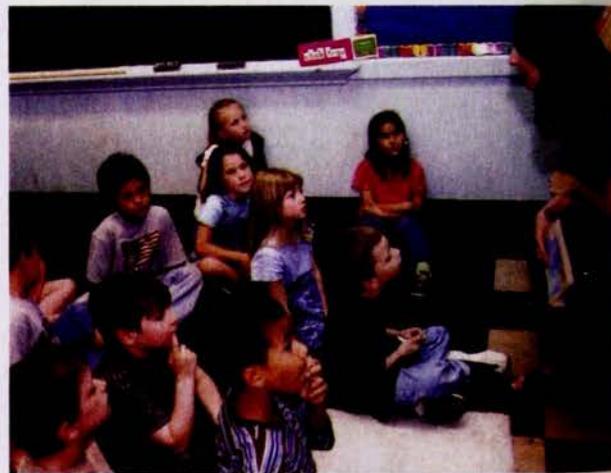
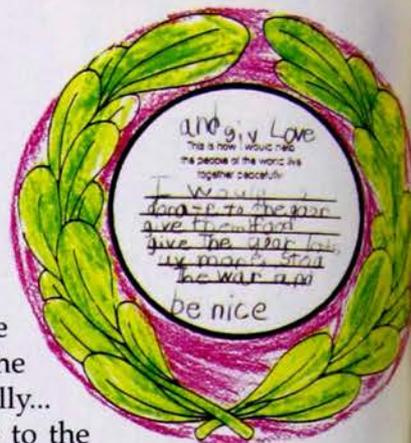
Peace Ingredients, According to Children

Shortly after September 11, 2001, Hannah, our first grader, brought home a piece of art that finished the statement: This is how I would help the people of the world live together peacefully... Her answer was that she would donate to the poor, give food to the hungry, give the poor more money ("lots uv money" were her exact words), stop the war, be nice, and give love. I was astonished that a class of first graders in Jefferson Elementary School in Bergenfield, New Jersey, was able to see the connection between peace and a world of well-sustained and satisfied people. I was amazed, because I had spent the week working with an author who was expounding on that same theme, but he had used 3500 words and still wasn't quite satisfied!

I wondered how other children from other contexts around the world would finish that statement. So we asked them. We asked national church workers, missionaries, staff members who traveled, colleagues abroad, freelance photographers (and anyone else we could find) to talk to children they met inside and outside the church to find out what their ideas were on how to have peace in the world. The results of our queries unfold in this issue. A big thanks to Mrs. Gail Ebenstein and the first graders at Jefferson Elementary School for the idea.

Finally, next month a long and full chapter of the GBGM's history draws to a close. Our general secretary and publisher, Dr. Randolph Nugent, retires at the end of the year with 30 years of service to the General Board of Global Ministries. Our prayers and our thanks go with him. We open this issue with a tribute to his years of service written by our former editor, Alma Graham.

Stayed tuned. Our next issue will include an interview with our new general secretary to start off the new year. Until then, I hope these words from children will remind you that the Prince of Peace, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, arrived as a baby at Christmas. His message of peace still rings clear for our world today, and, as you'll see from many of their statements, the children have heard it.



Gail Ebenstein reads to her class of first graders at Jefferson Elementary School in Bergenfield, NJ.

Christie R. House

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We can have peace if we help each other—for example, if someone is very sick, we can take care of them.

I think to have peace,
people must not be greedy.

**TO HAVE PEACE,
PEOPLE NEED TO STOP
FIGHTING, TO STOP
HAVING WARS.**



**I would be good to all
people. I would not give
anyone any weapons.**



If there were peace they would
not shoot each other...there would be no
hungry children, no barefoot children, no
children without parents.

**THEY SHOULD HELP EACH
OTHER AND NOT BE SELFISH.**



**To have peace, people should
respect each other, love each other
and spend time with each other.**



**People must not fight if they want to have
peace. There should not be any wars.**



*Seeing at Every Moment
An Opportunity for Mission*

Dr. Randolph Nugent

by Alma Graham

After 30 years of service to United Methodism at the General Board of Global Ministries—20 of them at the helm as General Secretary—the Rev. Dr. Randolph Nugent is preparing to retire. In 1972, when he first joined the mission agency, the Vietnam War was raging, Eastern Europe was under Communist domination, several African countries were still subject to colonial rule, and the church's last four racially segregated annual conferences were still in existence. In 2002, as he steps down, he leaves a mission board and missionary contingent distinguished by their diversity and inclusiveness, with new mission initiatives in Asia (Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Mongolia); Eastern Europe (Russia, Latvia, Lithuania, Kazakhstan); Africa (Uganda, Kenya, Rwanda, Burundi, Senegal, Cameroon, Sudan); and Central America (Honduras).

Last year in these pages, I cited three aspects of Dr. Nugent's legacy: the extension of mission into places where the Gospel had not heretofore been heard or heeded; the broadening of the mission concept to include indigenous missionaries bringing Christ's message to their own; and the transformation of the mission board itself into a rich, diverse microcosm of God's world. In addition, the mission agency developed the office of Mission Evangelism, which launched a global program of faith enrichment through music. Recent developments include Radio Africa, a shortwave frequency broadcast, and the Mission Resource Training Center in Atlanta, Georgia. Many people contributed to these changes, inside the Board and out; but it is no accident that the changes happened on Dr. Nugent's watch.

Diversity at the Board

"Early on, we had to work to make this a diverse organization," Dr. Nugent told me. "That was very intentional. Once you live in a diverse organization, you can no longer *not* live in one because of its richness and the different gifts that people bring."

He characterized his first decade with the Board, when he was Associate General Secretary heading the former National Division, as "the formative years of positioning this organization to be as diverse as it could be." He added: "We saw this country in the 1970s as a major mission field. There was a need to build new coalitions to help the church do justice." In 1972, The United Methodist Church was already the most pluralistic of the major Protestant denominations in the United States, with significant Black,

Hispanic, Asian, and Native American membership. In the quadrennium to follow, the ethnic minority local church would become a missional priority. Later still, national plans for Native American, Hispanic, and Asian American ministries would be adopted.

In 1975, however, Dr. Nugent could ask: "Can The United Methodist Church be a place where people of various colors, cultures, and languages plan together, work together, worship together, witness together, and serve together?" His ministry in the National Division was instrumental in answering that question with a resounding "Yes!" In 1976, the division began a purposeful effort to diversify its staff. Its programs sought to empower women, youth, and the urban and rural poor, to fight racial injustice, and to eliminate institutional racism from society. "You can never put human rights on the back burner," Dr. Nugent affirmed in 1981. That year, he was chosen from a field of 40 candidates to be General Secretary of the GBGM—heading one of the largest mission agencies in the world.

Extending the Mission

Global outreach through new mission initiatives is a characteristic of Dr. Nugent's tenure, and he celebrates "the capacity to proclaim the Gospel in all these different places." When he made his first trip to Russia, it was still part of the Soviet Union. "Few people believed that we could do anything there," he recalls; but, at the urging of a United Methodist laywoman working in the U.S.S.R., the general secretary and Board president traveled to Russia to see what might be possible.

"The first thing Bishop [J. Woodrow] Hearn and I did when we got to Russia [in January 1991] was to put our bags down and visit the Orthodox Church," Dr. Nugent recalls. "The person whom we visited took us immediately to the Patriarch. A lot of people were saying

that Russia was the province of the Orthodox Church and that other churches would not be welcome there. However, we found that not to be the case. We formed good relationships with the Orthodox Church in Russia."

Besides reaching new lands and peoples with the Gospel, the church's many new mission initiatives have fulfilled a second purpose. "With the new initiatives," Dr. Nugent observed, "we have been able to interest new constituencies." For example, he cited the number of United Methodists who became involved in mission through their interest in the work in Russia. "A lot of them had been on the sidelines," he said. "Now they are significantly involved."

As the mission agency of The United Methodist Church, the General Board of Global Ministries can help people on a large scale, everywhere, Dr. Nugent noted. No individual and no local church can be everywhere at the same time, but "together look what we can do. We can be in all the places where the Board has missionaries and mission institutions, initiatives, projects, and partnerships. We can be in China, in the inner city of every urban area in the United States, in all the prisons. Even a local church with a 3000-member congregation can't be all over the world, doing everything at once. But with 8 million United Methodists, we've got everybody involved somewhere—in action, in support, and in prayer."

From Missioned to Missionaries

"In mission evangelism," Dr. Nugent says, "it is critical that the people who were the objects of mission—the missioned—become the new missionaries. These people are now at the forefront of our evangelization efforts. They know their communities. They know the people. They can say: 'If God can do this for me, I know that God can do this for you, because I'm

from around the corner. I grew up with you. Let's talk.' Converts who become the new missionaries give our church its strength."

Between 1991 and 2001, Board-supported mission personnel doubled, increasing from 1090 to 2177—not counting 171,000 mission volunteers who served in 71 countries in 2000 and 2001. New and varied



Dr. Nugent protests the South African government's policy of apartheid at its embassy in Washington, DC.



Above: Dr. Nugent with the 1978 Indigenous Community Developers, new National Division mission personnel. Opposite p. 4: In 1972, Rev. Randolph Nugent became the Associate General Secretary for the National Division of the General Board of Global Ministries.

forms of mission are also increasing diversity, as mission changes direction, being carried from the Southern and Eastern Hemispheres to people in the North and West. In the Global Praise program, young people are both evangelizing and being evangelized through music. Youth are

also making short-term commitments as Mission Interns, US-2s, W. T. Handy Young Adult Missioners, and Global Justice Volunteers. As Missioners of Hope, young African adults help restore faith and aspiration to African children. As Regional Missionaries, indigenous people work in or near their homelands in Africa, Asia, and Latin America serving women, children, and youth.

Older people and retirees may be Primetimers, NOMADS, individual volunteers, or members of work teams. With the opportunities now available, there's a place in mission for everyone.

A newspaper article led Dr. Nugent to contact a young man whose expertise was breaking into computers. Now in college, the youth is working at the Board during

breaks and after graduation wants to work for the church. "This doesn't happen," Dr. Nugent says, "unless you see at every moment an opportunity for mission."

Global outreach is important, he continued, "but most people approach mission from the numbers while they ought to be looking at the relationships. In the church, we find our riches in relationships. We already have a global church here in the United States because everyone is here." People from all over the earth, he noted, are constantly coming and going between America and their homelands. With relationships around the globe, United Methodists in mission learn about events from different perspectives and can share those first-hand perceptions with people in the local churches back home.

Building on a Firm Foundation

Randolph Nugent grew up in The United Methodist Church. "My parents were always in the church," he says. "We children were always in Sunday school, always in the church, always in the MYF [Methodist Youth Fellowship]. After the MYF meetings, all the kids would come to my house." His father was an illiterate immigrant, a former sugar-cane cutter and, his son affirms, "a great man" who "taught me what I know." His mother taught him English. "I'd be writing at a little blue bench that my father made for me," he recalls. "That's where I had to diagram sentences." In high school, where he was a natural leader, "I had wonderful experiences," he says, "because I used to get into all the clubs. Oh, you came up against racism," he admits, "but you can't let that put you back." By always going to summer school and taking courses during school inter-



Left: Dr. Randolph Nugent, Dr. Robert J. Harman, and Bishop Dan E. Solomon at the Spring 2000 GBGM Board meeting.



In 1994, Dr. Nugent took part in a Health and Welfare Department sponsored dialogue in Semipalatinsk, Kazakhstan. Scientists and physicians from the United States and Kazakhstan discussed the effects of radiation on generations of people living in the nuclear testing areas of Kazakhstan.



Dr. Nugent (center) at Patrice Lumumba University in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, 2001.



Staff members of the General Board of Global Ministries (Dr. Nugent, back row second from left) meet with United Methodist African bishops.

sessions, he finished high school and graduated from college by age 18.

Next, as a young adult, he became a high-school English teacher, teaching at Samuel Gompers in Manhattan and at Andrew Jackson in Queens. Gompers was the subject of *Blackboard Jungle*, but the young Mr. Nugent "never had problems with the students, because I'd treat them with dignity and I'd teach them. I had a wonderful time teaching." Still, he could see that "people needed more than just English. In school, you saw that you could give [the students] knowledge and education, but that was not going to transform them. And, to use church language, as a teacher you couldn't talk about their souls." Ministry was a different kind of call. "You could deal with these things in the church. You could teach about faith and life." So he went to the Theological School at Drew University, was a pastor in Long Island City (in 1958, he was the first Black pastor appointed to an all-White church), worked in urban ministry in the Troy Conference, and was executive head of the Division of Overseas Ministries of the National Council of Churches when his denomination called him to the General Board of Global Ministries.

Still Much To Be Done

"In mission," Dr. Nugent said, "there is still so much to be done. I'm not unhappy about retiring," he added, "but I'm unhappy about the fact that so much is left to be accomplished. There is so much to do that, though the Board could change its form, it will never be out of business. The Board is *the* one part of our church where we are reminded of the task of mission all the time. For example, if it hadn't been for the church agencies, a number of our churches would have remained segregated. It was the agencies that

helped our church to grow.

"The reason I'm happy about mission, excited about mission, committed to mission," he continued, "is that it could change *me*. All of us need to say to one another: 'Since I know that I've been touched by God, I can touch other people to make it happen.' We also have to treat everybody with the kind of care and respect that we know God would show—*everybody*."

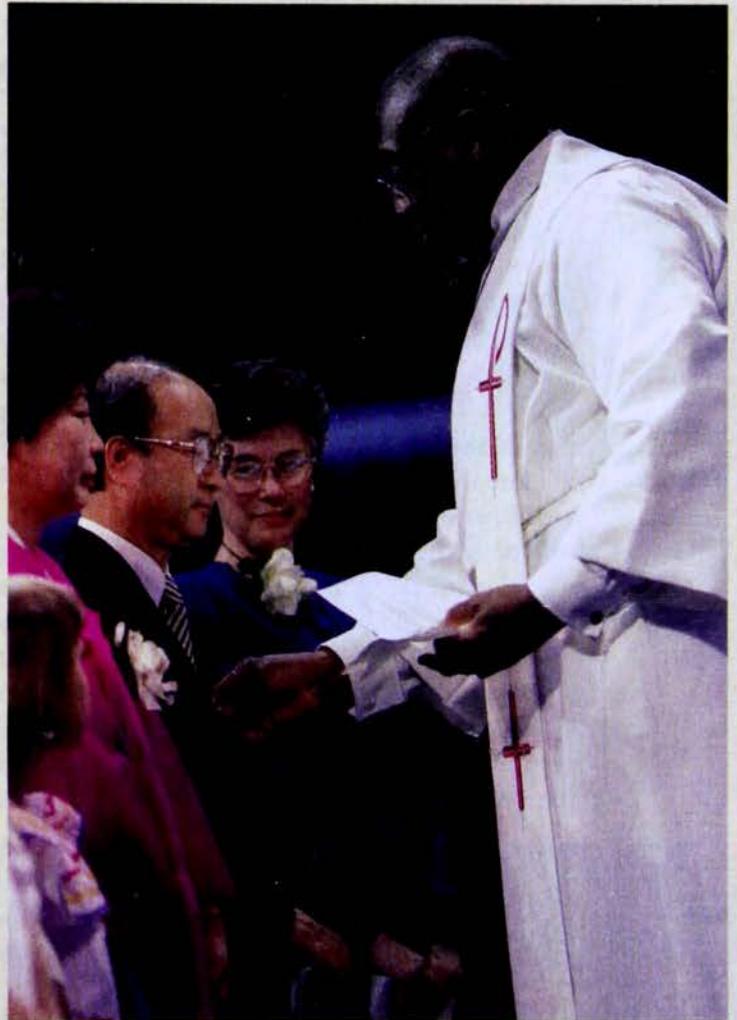
"My roommate at seminary later became the head of the chaplains in New York State prisons. When he told me of a man who needed to be out of prison but had to have a job, I brought the person here. There was concern in the unit where this man worked, but the very people who said they had been praying for him and helping him were precisely the ones I thought would never understand. In truth, you never know what God is going to do or who God is going to choose. God is saying, 'This one.' I say, 'Never this one.' And God says, 'That's the very one I'm going to use.'"

Blessings Along the Way

You cannot talk for long with Dr. Nugent without hearing him sing praises. He is full of appreciation for his mentors; for the Board's supportive directors and hardworking, dedicated staff; for colleagues in mission around the world; for United Methodist Women, who, he says, "are powerful in spirit and are the centerpiece around which the mission can be developed." He especially delights in his wonderful

family: his wife Barbara (a librarian for the blind and physically handicapped); his daughters, Patricia and Melissa; and his grandchildren Ceili (kay'lee) and Ellis. "I have been very, very blessed," he says, "in many, many ways—by God, of course, but by many people, all along the way."

Many who have worked with



Dr. Nugent places an anchor cross on newly commissioned missionary In Ki Lee at the Global Gathering, 1997.

him would say that he, himself, has been a blessing—both to his church and to countless people around the globe whose lives have been transformed by God through United Methodist mission.

Alma Graham is a consultant and past editor of New World Outlook, 1991-2001.

A Little Child Shall Lead Them

Views of African Children on Peace

by Shimba Mulunda

Since the World Trade Center attacks in New York on September 11, 2001, the world has been shaken by fear. Rudely awakened from an illusion it believed was truth, the world now exists in a state of confusion, wondering anxiously in which country, if any, safety and tranquillity can be found.

Since that dreadful September day, peace, once the major concern of two-thirds of the world's countries, has become a global concern. There is no single global definition

of *peace*, however, because the word means something different for one who has a family, for a street child, for a refugee, and for another who has no family and is dying of HIV/AIDS.

Children's Thoughts

As I talked about peace with children between the ages of 5 and 11 in Nairobi, Kenya, and in Kinshasa and Lubumbashi in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), I was amazed at how profound and varied their thoughts were. Children at

this age are still relatively innocent and psychologically less hampered than adults, who have brought so much pain and disarray into countless lives. These children live in an atmosphere of hope; they still hope for peace to prevail one day in their lives and countries, by God's grace.

Sadly, living in Kenya, which is surrounded by war-torn countries, it is easy to find and interview refugee children. Kenya has hosted a large number of refugees since the early 1990s. The children I spoke with are victims of war, most



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of them coming from the Great Lakes Region of Africa. They had various definitions of peace:

1. the absence of war
2. understanding among nations
3. helping one another
4. no fighting
5. loving one another
6. living without sin
7. love
8. loving all peoples
9. being united
10. ceasing to fight
11. living without disagreement
12. loving your neighbor as you love yourself
13. unity
14. ceasing to disturb others
15. following the 10 commandments

More specifically, I asked children in both Kenya and the DRC two questions about peace. The first was: What does the world need to do in order to have peace?

The children of Nsele Twende (a rehabilitation center for street children on the outskirts of Lubumbashi sponsored by the Women's Division of the General Board of Global Ministries) suffered greatly from war in the DRC.

"The world should stop the war in the Democratic Republic of Congo so that my country may develop," said Raphael, age 11. He lost both parents in the war.

"I pray for peace in the DRC, and for wisdom for the leaders so that peace may prevail in the country," said Mpenda, age 9, who lost her father and many of her friends and relatives.

Matty, age 8, says that she prays for war to cease so that she can find her family members.

Sunday school children from the Mapamboli United Methodist Church, Mbomu-Kinshasa, DRC, voiced the following opinions:

"Presidents should agree among themselves."

"The world needs to build schools."

"Parents should educate their children even if they believe that they are not smart, instead of spending money on drinking."

"[People should] make other people feel comfortable while providing for their basic needs."

Nine-year-old Rachel Shinga recited a poem she had learned in Sunday school.

*Hope for you the orphan,
Hope for you the street child,
Hope for all uprooted people,
Hope for all the Congolese.
Let us announce this message of peace
In this world of troubled mornings.
Let us announce this word of peace.
Satan has deceived us
With empty promises,
And we are left lost and hopeless.
Our loved ones have died with sorrow,
O God our Lord!
Our hearts are full of distress,
O God our Lord!
O, war is evil!
We want peace,
Yes, we want peace, and
reconciliation.*

Sunday school children from the Lavington Methodist Church, Nairobi, gave the following advice:

"The world should obey God [and] parents, and love one another to have peace," stated Janette Wambui, age 11.

"The world should stop fighting," said Peter Karanja, age 9.

"The world should stop fighting and talk about God to those who are fighting, because if someone has God, then he or she has peace," according to Mercy, age 11.

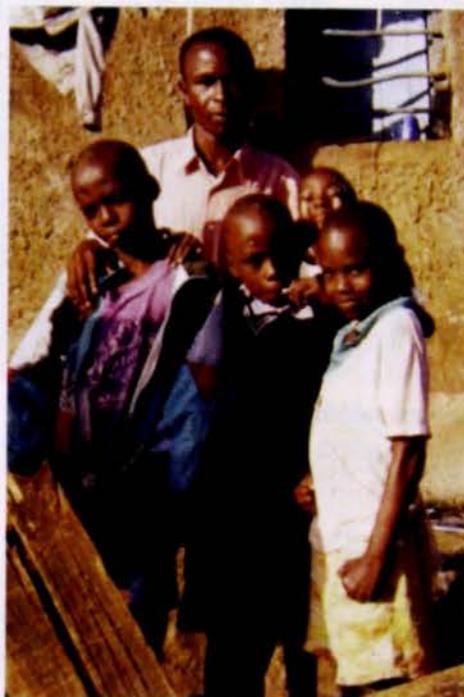
Children from St. Joseph Ecumenical School, Nairobi, made other recommendations, several of which follow.

"Presidents should meet and talk about peace," said Jean de la Croix, age 11, a refugee from Burundi.

"Dialogue is the best way to get peace," said Jean Claude, age 11, a refugee from the DRC.

"The world should be told that God is against war," stated Nadia, age 7, another refugee from Burundi.

"The world should stop fight-



Page 8: Sunday school students of the Mapamboli United Methodist Church in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo, pose for a group photo. Above: A family in the Kibera section of Nairobi, Kenya.

ing, should sit and look for the same idea and live with joy and love," suggested Linda, age 11, a refugee from Goma in the DRC.

"People should forgive one another, pray, and live together," said Goss, age 9, also a refugee from the DRC.

Children from Kibera, a slum area in Nairobi, offered their views: "The world should advise its people to unite all the tribes, pray for one another, and live as brothers



Shimba Mulunda poses with children of St. Joseph Ecumenical School in Nairobi, Kenya.

and sisters. The world should build hospitals and schools," advised Mercy Kandeny, age 9.

"We should talk to people about how to agree on issues and educate them," said Graham Avina, age 11.

The second question I asked was: How would you help the people of the world live together peacefully? The response to the second question was almost the same from all the children: "Tell them to stop fighting," "Pray for peace," "Pray for God's assistance," "Pray for war to cease."

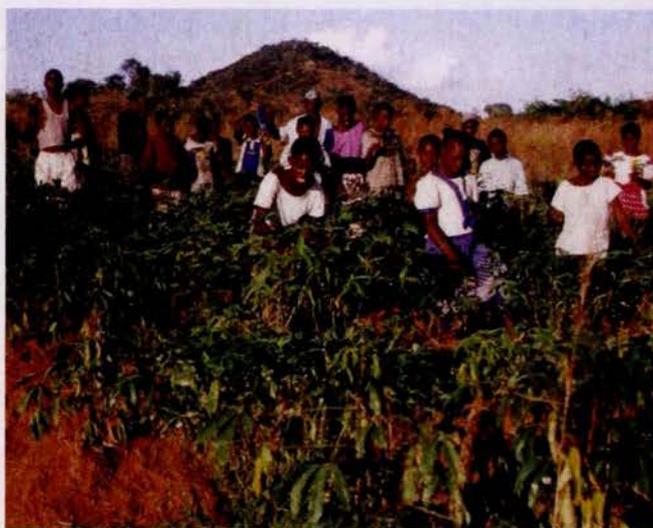
"If I had money, I would give food to others," said Jean Claude, age 11, a refugee from the DRC. "But I am limited by my age."

Abel Yieka summed it all up by saying: "The world needs peace, not war."

Lessons We Can Learn

From the answers of these children,

we can see that peace has a different meaning when it is considered in a different context. From the perspective of the Congolese children living near areas occupied by rebels, peace has taken on an urgency that can be detected in their answers. For them, peace is not something that they can wait



Children of the Nsele Twende Rehabilitation Center in Lubumbashi in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Page 11: Children in the Kibera section of Nairobi, Kenya.

for at home while politicians are away at a dialogue in a distant nation. Peace, for them, is something that is needed right here and right away. Having peace, to these children, means that they can be reunited with whatever remnants of their families the war chooses to spare.

By contrast, children in Kinshasa, the capital city of the DRC, which was almost completely taken over by rebels, had a different vision. Because most, if not all, of these children live in an immediate environment where fighting had taken place, they called for peace in order for their government to build better schools. They wanted their parents to send them to school, and they wanted warring factions to sit down together and negotiate. Children in the slums of Nairobi live in an atmosphere of relative peace, but as refugees, they think that peace has become the responsibility of the world. They say nations need to work together in order to give those who live in slum areas food and hospitals.

Most of the children I talked with have always lived below the poverty line. Armed conflicts have terrorized them and accentuated their already acute suffering (physical, emotional, and psychological). But they have not lost hope because they believe that somehow, someday, God will rescue them and bring them peace. The lesson we should learn from these children is that we need to love one another, avoid sin, and be like the children themselves. As the Bible says:

"Then little children were being brought to him in order that he might lay his hands on them and pray. The disciples spoke sternly to those who brought them; but Jesus said, 'Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs,'" (Matthew 19:13-14). From that point peace can prevail in the world. Coming from the mouths of children who seem to have little reason for hope today, but who choose to trust in God for their tomorrow, we, as the global community, who are much more privileged than these children, could use a little faith, such as these children have, and trust in a power greater than all human efforts—God.

It is a challenge for every human being to look back and try

to clean up the mess that we, as a global human body, have made; to recognize our wrongdoing; and to decide to make positive changes that enable us to reconcile first with ourselves, and then with others. Only then can we prepare a secure and safe future for these children.

We have a big lesson to learn from these children who have never experienced true peace in their home countries and yet can describe the peace that they know can exist.

Aiding the Children

The world has not turned a deaf ear to the cries of these children. The United Methodist Church has established a number of programs worldwide to assist afflicted children. The Nsele Twende

Center in Lubumbashi, the St. Joseph Ecumenical School in Nairobi, and the Mapamboli Sunday school in Kinshasa are good examples.

Mpenda and Matty at Nsele Twende thank the GBGM and the Women's Division not only for funding their schooling and their living expenses but also for sending medicine. Most of the Mapamboli Sunday school children testify that the church supports their education.

In summary, the children want to say: "Do to the world what you want the world to do to you."

Shimba Mulunda is an International Missioner with Women, Children, and Youth. She is assigned by the GBGM to the East Africa Region.

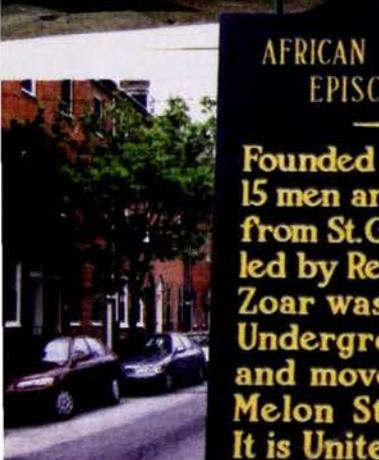




PHILADELPHIA

Children Speak Out on Peace

by Christie R. House



AFRICAN ZOAR METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Founded here in 1794 by 15 men and three women from St. George's Church, led by Rev. Harry Hosier. Zoar was active in the Underground Railroad and moved to 12th and Melon Streets in 1883. It is United Methodism's oldest Black congregation.

Top: A mural on the Salvation Army building in Philadelphia. Center: The United Methodist Neighborhood Services on Broad Street. Above: The neighborhood of Kearny Elementary School, a block from the Zoar Church marker (right).

Drizzle had just started to drop a gray sheet over Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, as I made my way to Kearny Public School to talk to some of the students about the need for peace in our world today. General Philip Kearny Elementary School, K-5, is in the Spring Garden/Girard section of Philadelphia. About 94 percent of its students are African American, with close to 5 percent Latino children and only 1 percent Anglo. The median annual income in this neighborhood of Philadelphia is roughly \$9000 per capita, according to census statistics.

Some of the children in the school come from stable home environments, where one parent or both parents are working. Some of the children come from single-parent households; some live with both parents or in blended families. Some families survive on welfare, while some parents struggle to learn new skills and find jobs so that they can move off the welfare rolls in accordance with the limits imposed by the sweeping welfare reform legislation passed in 1996.

The children that I interviewed

at Kearny School answered the open-ended questions I asked about how to have peace in the world with responses that reflected both local and global concerns, almost at the same moment. The most obvious response, echoed by children from all around the world within these pages, was offered by first-grader Brittany Carder, "Stop fighting and be nice."

But then Quinton McCoy said: "The reason we don't have peace is that people are robbing the banks and there are drugs on the street. There's a war in Afghanistan. To have peace we need to get the drugs off the street and stop the robberies." The local and the global aspects were all in his mind together, and he was sure they related somehow but hadn't sorted it out yet. As the children continued to talk about peace at school, in their community, and in world, they began to put it together.

They dwelled for a little time on the drug problem. Ameer Savage remarked: "Try to stop people from selling drugs because there is no reason for people to be taking them." But quickly they moved to thoughts about the World Trade Center tragedy in New York. "My cousin was in New York on September 11. They didn't like America," offered Tionnah Plant. Amira Savage remarked: "They only like the kind of people they are and they didn't like America." But this train of thought brought them back to thinking about their own lives again.

"Make friends with people you don't like," said Brittany, and "show them respect" chimed in David, a second-grader. Ameer said: "Try to see what is the enemies' problem. Why would they want to bomb us? We need to see if we can fix it." And finally Tionnah remarked "Make sure you help people who have no food and homeless people. Give the homeless homes and the foodless



Tionnah Plant,
3rd grade

Make sure you help people who have no food and homeless people. Give the homeless homes and the foodless food.



Brittany Carder,
1st grade

Make friends with people you don't like. Build more houses.



Quinton McCoy,
4th grade

To have peace we need to get the drugs off the street and stop the robberies. There's a war in Afghanistan. We need more cooperation in the world. People need to get along, stop fighting, clean up the community.



Amira Savage,
2nd grade

Treat people the way you want to be treated.



Ameer Savage,
5th grade

Try to stop people from selling drugs because there is no reason for people to be taking them.

food." And Brittany added, "build more houses."

So while I thought the conversation might travel down the road of blame, fear, and name calling against the perpetrators of the 9/11 attacks, the children surprised me. They turned instead to the "why" question (Why do we not have peace in the world?) and found the answers in themselves. They considered the global problems, looked within their own communities, and suggested ways that they themselves and others in their community could work together to alleviate some of the obstructions to peaceful living. They knew they should respect one another and make friends with children who came from different cultural and religious backgrounds. They also voiced an urgent desire to get the drugs off their streets.

United Methodist Neighborhood Services

Dr. Mary White, executive director of the United Methodist Neighborhood Services Center in Philadelphia has served some of the children of Kearny and their families through the programs at the center. United Methodist Neighborhood Services (UMNS) is a national mission institution of the General Board of Global Ministries (GBGM). Its purpose is: "to service the needs of poor and marginalized inner city Philadelphia people, especially women, children, and youth. The mission is to meet immediate personal needs and to produce a positive impact on the whole community. This is accomplished by involving community members in decisions and by empowering individuals to become self-sufficient. UMNS provides direct service and counseling and cooperates with other human service agencies" (UMNS Mission Statement).

In order to aid women in their efforts to find work or higher paying jobs, UMNS offers computer classes to

teach basic skills and computer operations. Often, Dr. White finds that the women who have been living on welfare have no work discipline. "There are four things we teach

besides the basics of computer processing in our welfare-to-work program: punctuality, responsibility, accountability, and honesty. We treat the training as though it were a full-time job. Many of them show up on time. Others choose not to come back. They need the discipline. Otherwise, how are they going to keep a job when they are hired?" Many of the women who complete the program do find jobs and keep them.

UMNS traces its beginnings to the 1883 session of the Philadelphia Annual Conference, when the Women's Home Missionary Society of the Philadelphia Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church was formed. In 1889, the society opened an immigrant home a block away from Philadelphia's steamship landing. Immigrants were met as they came off the ships into port. The women's mission was to carry out work among the destitute and the needy. That mission remains in place today, over a hundred years later.

For the children of Philadelphia's Spring Garden/Girard neighborhood, UMNS provides an after-school program, summer enrichment day camp, overnight camping experiences, and a breakfast club the first Saturday of every month. It also provides care for preschoolers so that their mothers can have a "Mom's Time Out." Dr. White remembers a recent breakfast club meeting in which the children watched a film and talked about what they wanted to do with their lives. "One little boy, Dante, said, 'I want to be a minister, because a minister helps and saves people,'" Dr. White recalled. It was a meaningful moment for her.

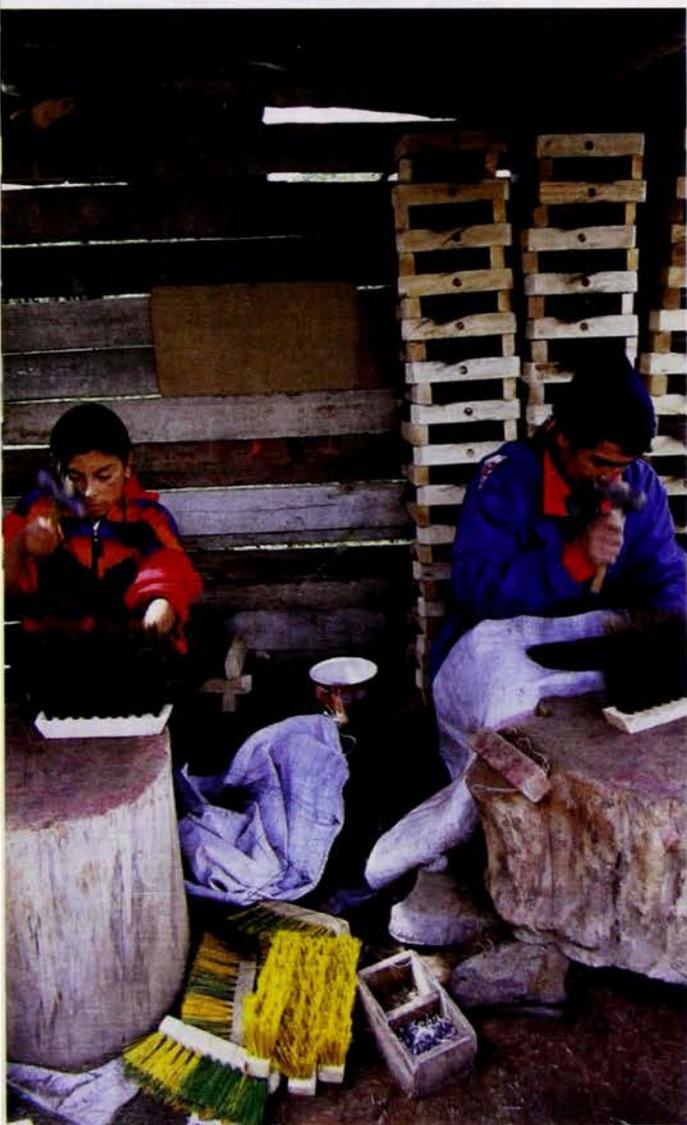
Christie R. House is the editor of New World Outlook.



I Give You Peace

Children In Ecuador

by Eunice Arias • photos by Richard Lord



Have you ever heard the word "violence"?

Silence was the answer to my question.

I tried other questions: Have you ever heard of someone who is violent? Have you ever seen a violent person? Have you ever heard violent words?

Silence was the answer to my questions.

My husband, Luis, and I were in a small classroom located in the El Sembrador (The Sower) Community Educational Center in Pastocalle, Ecuador. The audience consisted of 26 boys and girls, 6 to 7 years old, both Protestants and Catholics, and I was trying to provoke a "brainstorm" so that we could talk later about their understanding and personal experience of peace. I had thought that it would be a good approach to start from the opposite side of peace—violence.

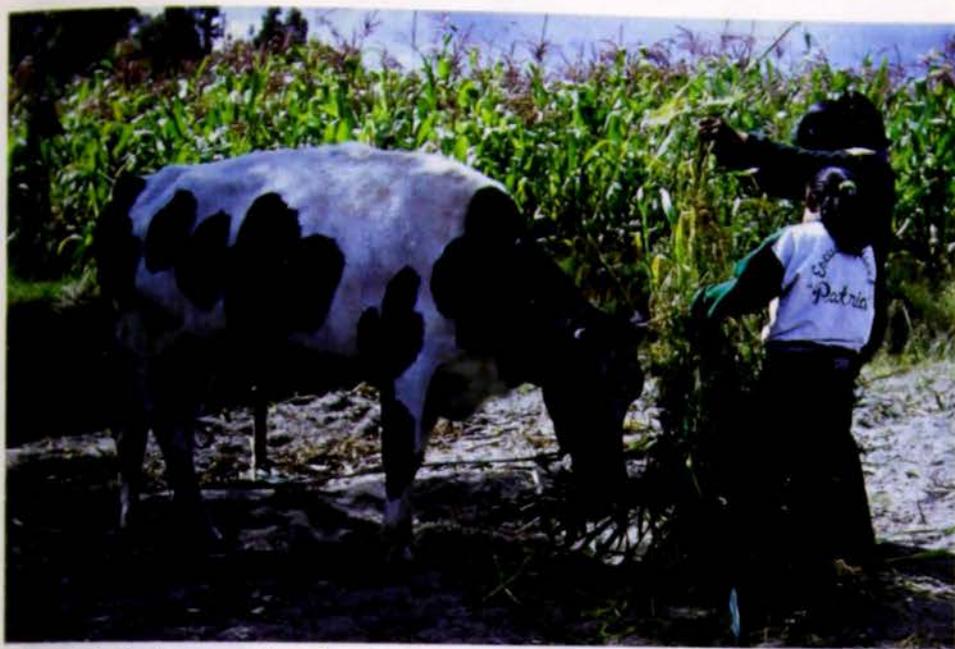
Have you heard the word "peace"?

There I got their attention; light shone in some eyes. But silence again was the answer to this question. While I was trying to decide if I should start telling the story of the Blue Seaman in "The Toy Store" (who "died" defending his right not to go to war), a little hand was raised and a little voice coming from a small and fragile girl said, "Yes, I have heard the word 'peace' at the church." One of her friends explained to me that it is the priest at the Catholic Church who says: "Peace to you all." The group started to warm up, other hands were raised, and a girl described what usually happens at the Evangelical Methodist Church: "People shake hands and 'give' you peace."

Isolated from the Real World?

A United States visitor was surprised by the fact that children in

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Page 14: Father and daughter in Pastocalle, Ecuador, make brooms. Above: Yadida and Soledad Herman Eras feed livestock in Pastocalle, Ecuador.

this small Ecuadoran town did not know that war is destroying countries around the world, damaging cities and towns, killing people of all ages. He thought that the children were alienated from the world.

The first thought that came to my mind was that these children didn't reply to my first question about violence simply because they didn't know the word, or it was meaningless for them. In order to continue working, I reformulated my inquiry. Later, as I was paying attention to the group and the context in which they live, I realized that boys and girls are not used to being asked about their opinions or personal experiences. Rather, they are accustomed to "school" ways of asking a question, that is, repeating the correct answer. I see children who are not being taken into consideration by adults. Every day, teachers stare at the children and possibly make them fearful of giving the wrong answer. Indeed, silence is profusely used by the oppressed as a first answer to new situations, reflecting lives that are accustomed to suffering violence in various ways. This kind of silence does not mean peace at all.



As teachers, we do not sense that there is a problem when children do not have information about what is going on in the outside world or we think the information is not important for them. We feel more annoyed by a reality in which it is normal to live without potable water, sanitary facilities, or the possibility of enjoying a warm shower. The children's reality means that they are not able to sleep until breakfast time because they have to feed the animals before going to school at seven on a cold and misty morning.

What is more distressing is to realize that in their world they have experienced a prolonged and profound form of violence. They have lost their mother language, *Quichua*. Programs have been established to enable the communities to learn *Quichua* again, although not everyone is in favor of the idea. Some people take for granted that speaking *Quichua* is a sign of ignorance and underdevelopment—a perspective that the Spanish conquerors wanted the indigenous communities to assume 500 years ago. The multicolor world of native languages given by the Creator took on the single color

of Spanish as a sign of a new time of civilization. At the present time, English is making its way as the new sign of progress and well-being.

When I asked the questions in another class, an older child (9) told us that there is violence when a man beats a woman, a reality he had seen and heard about in a TV program. Their personal world is so violent that children don't "see" (or don't want to see) violence between their parents or aggressiveness by others toward them. Such situations are suffered as a natural part of life.

In addition, Christian churches sometimes compound the problem. By emphasizing the verbal proclamation and the new life in Christ out of context, the church has sometimes contributed to the repression of the people's personal experiences of violence. Since they say nothing about violence, there seems to be no reason to change society in that regard. It is always a surprise to hear children at church giving grown-up answers, in a very well-organized mixture of Bible verses. One can only wonder, is it possible that these children and young ones don't have any problems at all in their world?

Hope for Peace from a Child

Rubem Alves, a Brazilian theologian and psychologist, says: "Today there are no reasons for optimism. Today it is only possible to have hope. Hope is opposed to optimism. Optimism exists when it is spring outside and then it is spring inside. Hope exists when



Edison Augusto, age 9, Pijal, Ecuador

What does the world need to do to have peace?

Edison Augusto: Pray.

How does prayer help?

E: God hears us.

So we don't have peace because the people aren't praying hard enough?

E: Right.

How can you help everyone in the world live in peace?

E: Help the elderly women as they walk along the street.

How will this help?

E: Because Jesus says we are to help the poor.

Giovani Paredes Guzman, age 13

Giovani Paredes Guzman:

Everybody in the world first of all has to have good friends.

And that will bring peace?

G: Yes, if everybody in the world is friends with everyone else, we will live in peace.

And how can you help this happen?

G: Always have good friends, not enemies. And as the Bible says, "Love your neighbor."

Are you aware that there are wars going on in the world?

G: Yes, war happens because people have enemies, [such as] President Bush and Osama Bin Laden. This is about to cause the Third World War.

Does this scare you?

G: Yes, of course, it scares me a lot. If one of them drops a nuclear bomb, that will be the end.

And what do you think that you can do to keep this from happening?

G: To help bring about peace, we have to start right here among the children by being good friends with each other, living in peace with each other, not fighting with each other. Then when they are older they will not be enemies. It is having enemies that causes the wars.



Jos David, age 15, Pastocalle, Ecuador

Jos David: Everyone has to decide to live in peace and not kill each other. Just live in peace.

And how can this happen?

J: They just stop fighting and killing each other. Just live in peace.

What are the problems that cause the fights?

J: Well, when some people talk with each other, they begin to disagree.

One says that what the other is saying isn't true. And they begin to fight with each other. That's how it starts.

What can you do to help bring peace to the world?

J: Not fight with others, walk in peace. When I talk with my friends, do it calmly. Then I don't begin to fight with them, because that isn't worth it. Just be at peace with everyone.

So you're saying that when one person wants to fight with another, the other person simply says, "NO."

J: That's right. And he extends his hand in peace. That way they can prevent fighting with each other. That's all.

Yadida Herman Eras, Pastocalle, Ecuador

If the different countries would stop fighting with each other the world would be united, there would be no more corruption, and the presidents would take care of the poor.

We should organize campaigns. Help people know what their rights are and help them know what their responsibilities are as well. And there needs to be a lot of education for the ones who do not understand. That way, everyone will know the world belongs to all of us.

Perhaps when people have an education, they can work or do something useful with their lives. When they do not have an education they often take the wrong road and start doing drugs and other bad things. And the important thing is for them to make



the right choices. Education helps them and God's love helps them too.

God's love helps morally and physically as well. And the walk with Christ is beautiful. It keeps us on the right path and we don't take the wrong road.



there is drought outside and still there are fountains of water bubbling in the heart. Optimism is joy 'because of' something human, something natural. Hope is joy 'in spite of'; it is a divine thing. Optimism is having roots in time. Hope is having roots in eternity. The optimism is fed by big things. Without them, optimism dies. Hope is fed by small things. Hope blooms in small things. It is enough to be a strawberry at the abyss's border." (from *A Espanica De Paz Nos Vem de Uma Crianca*, by Tania Mara Viera Sampaio)

Third grade children told us that peace is shaking hands, hugging someone, singing, and being together. They said, "Today we visited Laura, who is sick. She has been absent from school for some days, so we went to her home to see how is she doing. We prayed for her, asking God to make her well again, and we gave her mother some money we had collected in school in order to buy the pills Laura needs."

Small coins lovingly given by small children of a small town in the Ecuadoran Andes, sons and daughters of economically small families—the hope for peace comes from the little ones of the world.

I Give You Peace

"I give you peace" say people at church while shaking hands or hugging each other. When little children who live very hard and sometimes violent lives have the chance to experience the peace that runs through the Christian community, there is hope that they may learn that there is a different and better way of living. "I give you peace" is the Good News that not everything is lost: the indigenous people living in Pijal (Province of Imbabura) haven't lost their native



language; they still use their own style of clothes and affirm their right to be different. They resisted giving up their ways and little by little the harvest is in sight: the community is beginning to be heard and respected by the White population.

"Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." Three years ago a small but faithful local Methodist church decided that it was time for the children of Pastocalle to receive a better education. At first,



the church did not know what to do or how to do it, but it had hope that peace could come from its decision. Peace is beginning to grow. At the end of the third school year, parents, children, teachers, and members of the Iglesia Evangélica Metodista Unida de Pastocalle y del Ecuador joined in a thanksgiving service. It was the first time a school worship service was held at the Methodist church. Catholic parents whose children attend the school are no longer afraid of their children being "forced" to be part of the Methodist church or of something evil happening to them. At the

service, a big bare tree was drawn on a sheet of paper. In a deeply moving gesture, everyone, even those who don't know how to write, expressed on a small piece of colored paper his or her reasons for being thankful to God. When the papers were attached to the tree it was so full of colorful leaves, flowers, and fruits that it looked as if it would fall down!

Peace also showed up when 48 boys and girls sang the Ecuadoran national anthem in Quichua in a clear and loud voice! Surely the heavens rejoiced as well!

Say, "I give you peace" while you share what you are and what you have with the little ones of the Earth. Say, "I give you peace" while you pray that hope for peace is not lost around the world. May God's peace be with you always and with the Lord's whole creation. Amen.

Eunice Arias and her husband Luis Aramayo are GBGM missionaries assigned to serve in Ecuador. Originally from Uruguay, Eunice advises churches in the Sierra region of the Andes in Christian education. She and her husband have five children.

Richard Lord is a freelance photographer who lives in New York City.

LETTERS FROM Argentina

Children from a Methodist Church in Argentina sent their thoughts on peace to *New World Outlook*. Our thanks to Bishop Aldo Etchegoyen, bishop emeritus of the Methodist Church of Argentina and current general secretary of the Methodist Council of Bishops in Latin America and the Caribbean (CIEMAL), for facilitating this contribution to the issue.

A

Question: What does it mean for me that Jesus was born as the Prince of Peace?

B

Question: What does it mean for my country and for the world?

Mailen Silva, 4th grade

A For me it means that He is good, in solidarity, educated, always forgiving. He does not hit others, does not seek conflict, and He respects every one.

B For my country it means that there will not be war, the people will not fight and will not insult others. For the world there will be no bad people, no one will rob another, no one will die in war, there will be no poor people, and everyone will respect each other.

Ezekiel, 4th grade

A For me, this means laughter and great joy.

B For the world, great happiness, even for those who are not from Argentina.

Carolina Denise Quelo, 4th grade

A That He is good, forgiving, helpful, generous.

B It means that if God were governing there would be no war, and the people would not have to beat their pots and pans in protest.

Florencia Fugeras Gómez, 4th grade

A He teaches me to be in solidarity, to share, to be calm and not fight, to solve problems without conflict.

B For me Jesus gives happiness to the country. For the world it means that those who wage war come to understand that it is not acceptable.

Mariano Lλουςas, 5th grade

A For me it means that he was born to bring peace.

B It means that if he were here, we would live in peace and love. It means that in the world, there would be no war or uprisings and there would not be so much hunger.

Juan Ramón Morales, 5th grade

A Not to fight, to seek reconciliation, not to insult others, etc.

B The country would live well, the politicians would not lie or twist things, and problems would disappear. In the world, there would be no terrorists and there would be peace. There would be no nuclear armaments.

David Lee, 5th grade

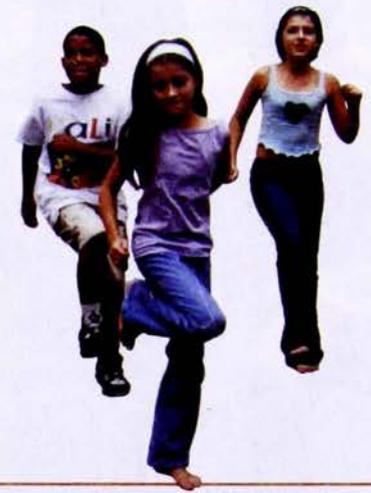
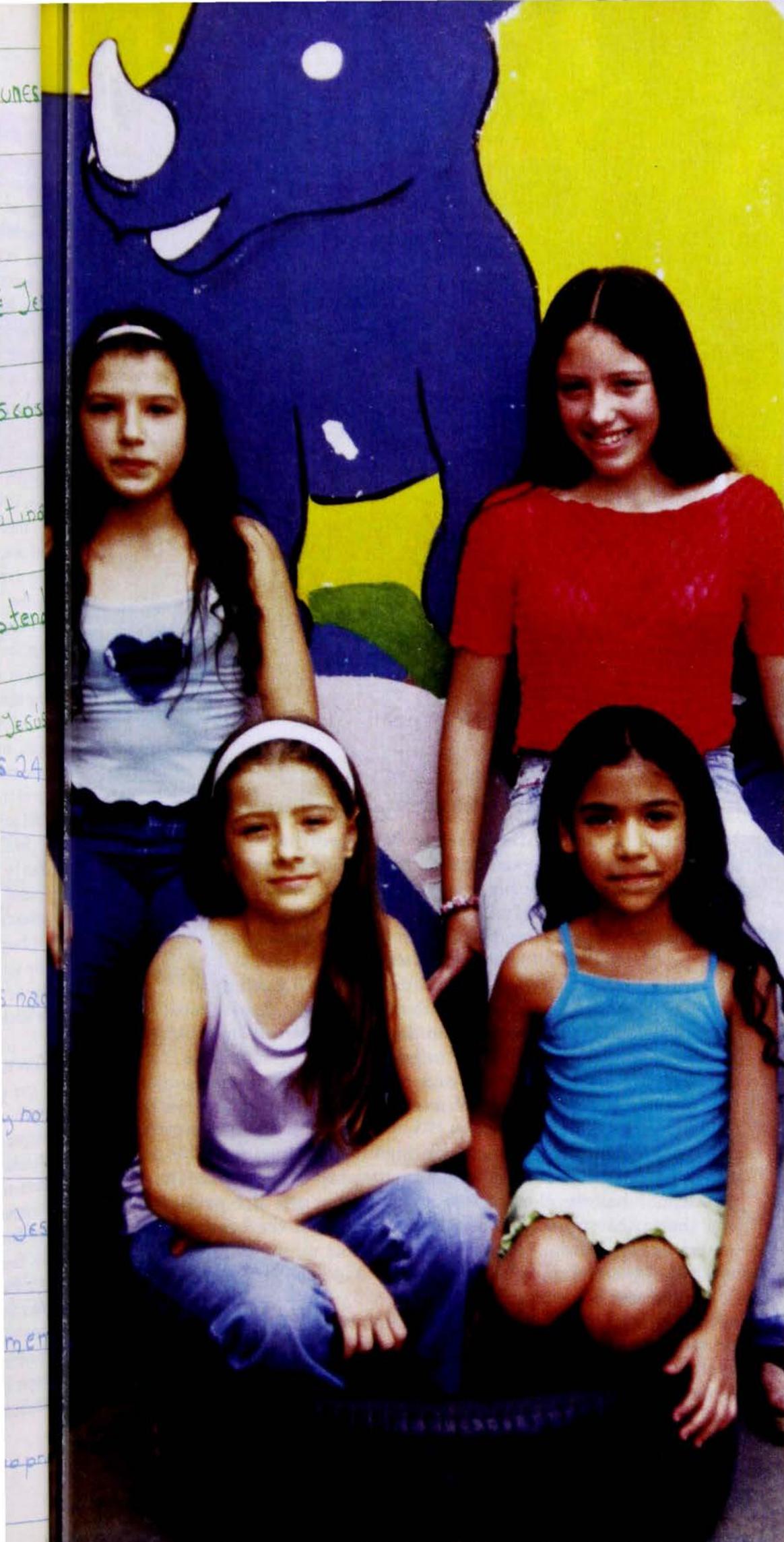
B It means there would be a country where children would eat until their stomachs were full and where peace is everywhere. It would be a world of peace where everyone helps each other.

Brenda Blanco, 4th grade

A For me it means that He is a person who resolves everything by talking and not by fighting with each other.

B For my country it means that there will be no more war. For the world it means that there will be no more pollution.

Translated by Joyce Hill

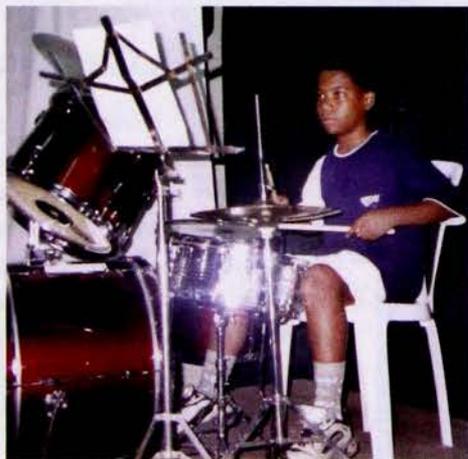


CHILDREN DREAM OF PEACE IN CALÍ, COLOMBIA

by Maritza Gamboa

The residents of the Comuneros 1 neighborhood of the Agua Blanca section of Calí, in Colombia, live in great need, both physical and spiritual. They need an awareness of God's presence. A high percentage of neighborhood residents are unemployed. Many of the fathers have left, leaving mothers as heads of families, and many of the children live with their grandparents. Some of the children will end up in a gang and addicted to drugs, evidence of the lack of a loving home and the poverty they have known. They are seeking something to help lift the load off their shoulders.

All the people—children, youth, adults, and the elderly—carry this heavy load. It is a sack



Top: Children of Alpha School's dance group perform a routine. Above: José Ricardo Rodríguez, a member of Alpha School's band, plays trap.

filled with rejection, bitterness, resentment, low self-esteem, hatred, and hostility. These are emotions that everyone has to deal with.

As far as the children's access to health care and education is con-

cerned, it depends on whether or not the person responsible for the child has a job that provides benefits. Health care and education are out of reach of the neediest people.

The fledgling Methodist church in Colombia is trying to reach the children. Alpha is a Christian school that provides students with an academic education, but, more importantly, invites the parents and the community in general to receive Christ as Lord and Savior.

To fulfill this purpose, during the 2001-2002 school years, the school has developed a program that uses sports, dance, theater, music, and social programs to benefit the community. The program provides opportunities for the children to discover and use their talents, raise their self-esteem, and awaken their desire to improve their own situations. At the same

time that the children have fun together, they also receive instruction in the Word of God in a relaxing atmosphere. They can learn that there are activities, such as sports, which have biblical references (I Corinthians 9: 24-25.) And they also learn that it is God who has given them their gifts, talents, and natural abilities.

The interviews that are transcribed at right were made with children from our Alpha Educational Institute. We continue to pray for guidance in developing strategies and providing resources so that the work may grow and that we may continue to be used as God's instruments.

Maritza Gamboa is the rector of the Alpha Educational Institute in Santiago de Calí and a member of the Methodist Church of Colombia.

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INTERVIEWS

The rich people need to give something to the poor so that they can have a roof over their heads and better clothes. The Word of God needs to be preached to the rich to touch their hearts so they will give things to the poor.



I would have campaigns in my neighborhood to collect money (for the poor) and to preach the Word of God and show the people that God is truth. I know that God is the solution.

Maria Camila Rodríguez, age 9, in 5th grade, lives with her parents and a sister in Cali. She belongs to Alpha School's dance group, plays in the band, and takes piano lessons.

First, everyone must believe in God and not respond when someone hits you and wants to fight. To do this we have to believe in God. I know



God and it is the best thing that has ever happened to me. Also every school should offer free education to the children who live in the streets and have to beg. Education is important because if they do not have an education, they are going to end up in gangs or addicted to drugs.

If I were mayor or president I would build a house or something like that for all of the poor and homeless, and I would preach the Word of God to them and pray that God would touch the hearts of the rich so they would help the poor. I would help the people know God because that is best of all.

Daniel Angarita, age 11, is in the 7th grade, and lives with his grandparents and his mother and brother. He belongs to Alpha's dance group and to the soccer team, plays in the band, and is learning to play drums.

Everyone needs to believe in God, because without God, there is no love in the world.

If I were mayor, I would mount a campaign to build houses and apartments so that no one would be homeless. I would also build a church



so the Word of God can be shared with everyone.

Ricardo Rodríguez Terreros, age 10, 6th grade, lives with his mother and grandmother. He belongs to Alpha's dance group, basketball team, and band, and he is learning to play the drums so that he can play in a band at his church.

The world needs to lose its indifference. I saw a news item in which the guerrillas were going to kill the police, but the people united in their defense and drove the guerrillas away with sticks.



I would mount a campaign and ask God for strength to create a foundation through which I would help the needy, elderly people, and children.

Nathalia Muñoz Giraldo, age 12, 8th grade, lives with her parents and three siblings and belongs to Alpha's dance group and band.

I believe that Christians should unite, and when there are elections, they should elect a Christian president who believes in God and will not use his position to make himself rich.

I would mount a campaign so that there would be peace, and I would preach the Word of God to the guerrillas to soften their hard hearts.

Viviano Muñoz Giraldo, age 10, 5th grade, lives with her parents and siblings and belongs to Alpha's dance group and band.

Parents should not divorce but stay together and love their children. Then children would not run away from home because they would have love and understanding. Then there would not be so many homeless children on the streets.

Sebastian Angarita, age 7, 3rd grade, lives with his mother, a brother, and grandparents and belongs to Alpha's dance group.



The Prince of Peace in the DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

by Patria Fermín de Rosario

We live in such a controversial world where each day at the sunrise we hear discouraging news of war, violence, poverty, and death. It seems almost impossible in such circumstances to consider the topic of peace. So many of us have lost hope of seeing the dawning of a day in which peace reigns in this world. The Dominican Republic is no exception. Dominicans live in a nation filled with violence and the prostitution of boys, girls, and adults. We have lost respect for each other and the love of the simple and beautiful things of life.

But it is important to remember that God, who created love, offers us the hope of peace, which we find in the Prince of Peace. Every minute of every hour we hear about things for which we must struggle, life to be saved, peace to be gained. How can we make peace? Who will do it and how will it be done? Jesus Christ as the Prince of Peace joins us in this great struggle. Let us look at what is written in the Bible.

Jesus Christ, Prince of Peace
In Isaiah 9:6 we read, "For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." These words were written at a time

when the people of Israel were being tested. The poem brings hope in the midst of great suffering. We can see how these people, subjugated by their oppressors, without hope, were seeking light. It is at this moment that a word of assurance was given to them: "A child has been born for us." That child would become the young man who would have dominion over the earth as the Prince of Peace. In the Bible, there are countless examples of a promise from God that has been fulfilled. For example, Abraham was promised a son and Isaac was born. God promised that the children of Israel would have a

Promised Land, and they were led from Egypt to Palestine. David was promised that an heir of his family would be the Christ, and Jesus is considered to be of his lineage.

If we continued to search the scriptures, we would find many more examples of promises that God has made and kept. Therefore, we realize that God is just and causes justice to prevail. God acts and intervenes in human history and is concerned about the welfare of the most vulnerable individuals in society. Our society is filled with insecurities, where each day the cost of living increases, public transportation becomes more difficult, trust

in each other is lost, and hope, peace, and tranquility have disappeared. Now is the time when we need to see the kindness and mercy of God.

God has promised us a world of peace, justice, and mercy—God with us. It is a world for which we wait with that same patience of Abraham, David, and the children of Israel. We must learn to wait for the reign of love, justice, and peace, which we receive through God's son, Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace. We must act in ways that enable us each day to feel that we are closer to that peace which we so desire, for God is willing to participate in the processes of

society to benefit the poorest among us. In this participation we become



Children and counselors at Alfalit's summer camp: "Children for Peace."

aware that God's action and identity are one and the same: justice and peace.

Peace for the Struggle

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid.

John 14: 27

In the Gospel of John, Jesus gives us the assurance that he is the Prince of Peace, and if we believe in God's love for us when we see Jesus crucified, dead, and resurrected for us, we are at peace with God. All our debts of the past are forgiven, and today we can receive the peace that Jesus Christ gives us. Previously we were bound by a deep, dark sense of guilt. We were unable to love each other and to change our lives. Now that we believe in him, we know we are loved and forgiven. Jesus invites us to follow resolutely, without fear, in order to receive the power of the Holy Spirit and struggle for a better world. He is the Lord of Peace at all times and in all ways. By faith we can attain holiness and be at peace with God through Christ.



Top and Above: The Santo Domingo summer camp peace workshops conducted by the Alfalit Children's Program.

Finally, this passage is one more example of how God has not left us without protection. He has promised us his peace, and we have no reason to live in fear. Rather, we should be joyful and willing to struggle and work to gain that peace for which we have longed. There are many ways to do this, such as helping one another, being more understanding, being more sympathetic to those most vulnerable to poverty and injustice. We should try to live in harmony in our homes with our own families and our neighbors. We should teach our children and show to others the love and respect we have for God.

Santo Domingo Workshops

Alfalit is an international nonprofit and nondenominational Christian organization that promotes literacy, education, health, nutrition, and community development in poor communities located in Latin America and Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking countries in Africa. Alfalit was founded in 1961 by Methodist missionary Eulalia Cook and Cuban Methodists Justo and Luisa Gonzalez.

For some time the Children's Program of Alfalit has been engaged with the children in an eastern sector of Santo Domingo, the Dominican Republic, in this struggle for peace. We in the program firmly believe that children have the right to express their opinions about whatever affects them. Therefore we are working with a group of children, studying together the topic of educating for peace. We understand that a "culture of peace" means understanding among all nations, communities, organizations, and people. It means growing in a spirit of respect for, and acceptance of, all races, cul-

Juan de Dios Vargas

In the peace workshops we had several conversations with children. The following dialogue is with Juan de Dios Vargas, who is 11 years old. He lives in a sector of Santo Domingo known as New Rebirth.

Patria: For you who is the Prince of Peace?

Juan: He is Jesus Christ, son of the eternal Father, creator of peace. To seek Jesus Christ is the only way to put an end to war in the world.

Patria: And what does "living in peace" mean to you?

Juan: Well, it means sharing with others, not fighting with my friends, my parents not arguing with each other.

Patria: What have you learned as we have talked about a "culture of peace"?

Juan: I have learned to share. I understand that a "culture of peace" is a combination of values, attitudes, and action that brings about a respect for life, a life that is a rejection of violence. I can love and care for my friends in solidarity and understanding.

Patria: Then do you believe that it is important to continue the struggle for peace?

Juan: Yes. If this was done throughout the world, everyone would know that Jesus is the one who brings peace.

tures, ideologies, and beliefs. Working with children increases our desire to live in a world of peace. It is impressive to hear the children express their longing for peace, and it is sad to see how we adults do so little to enable them to see their dreams become reality. Through workshops on peace, we tried to understand the position of the children as they addressed the topic.

Conclusion

As Christians, we are a people of peace promoting a culture of peace and reiterating a commitment of all to create a culture of peace. We dream that all people, regardless of age, race, or religion, will participate in a common project on behalf of the children. We trust in Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, for all time and for all people.

Patria Fermín de Rosario is the director of the Children's Program of Alfalit in the Dominican Republic.

PEACE WORKS FROM Children of Ecuador

The children of Emmanuel Evangelical Methodist Church in Quito, Ecuador, answered the *New World Outlook* questions with their artwork. Our thanks to

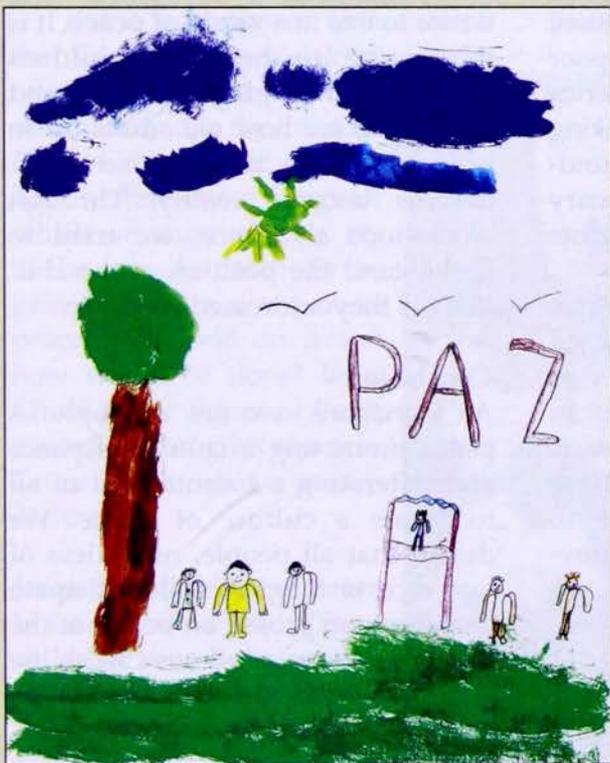
Joan Figueroa at Consejo Latinoamericano de Iglesias (CLAI) in Quito for her help in bringing these Peace Works to our readers.



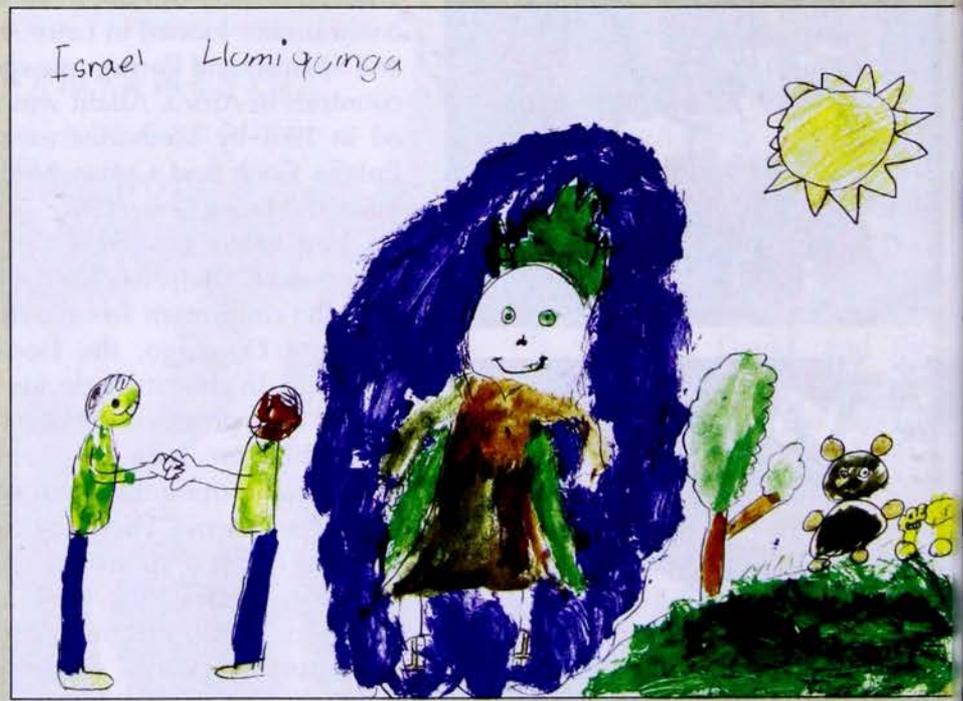
Bianca Yáñez—8 years old
LA PAZ = PEACE



Santiago Proaño—11 years old
"The Prince of Peace makes people become friends instead of enemies, making everyone get along well and not treat each other badly."



Marco Yáñez—7 years old
PEACE



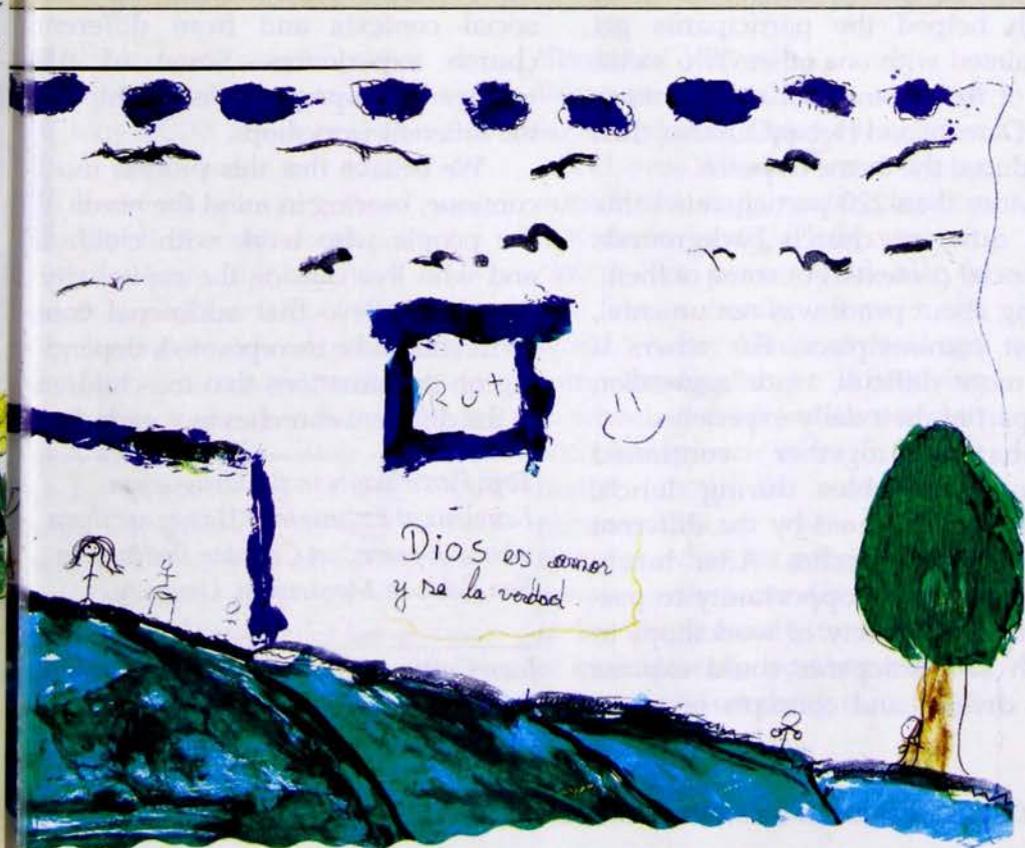
Israel Llumiquinga—7 years old
"Blacks and Whites join hands."



Andrés Balseca—10 years old

"After the attack on the Twin Towers, everyone helped each other."

LAS TORRES JEMELAS = THE TWIN TOWERS



Marta Yáñez—10 years old
May the Prince of Peace live.

Rut Pilatuña—10 years old
God is love and truth.



Uruguayan Ecumenical Encounter of Children and Teenagers

Happy Are Those Who Seek Peace

by Juan Gattinoni

The Uruguayan member churches of the Latin American Council of Churches (CLAI) planned an ecumenical encounter that took place in Montevideo, Uruguay, December 2001.

Christian Education workers from various churches were asked to attend a preliminary meeting to plan the encounter. Members of the planning group—Marta López, Blanca Cornero, Wilma Rommel, Juan Damián, and Mabel Gonnet—came from Anglican, Methodist, Waldensian, and Lutheran churches and from the ecumenical community of the Barrio Borro neighborhood. Ernesto Sinka and Juan Gattinoni participated on behalf of CLAI itself.

At their first meeting, they affirmed that children should be invited to participate in the planning process. In all subsequent meetings, children and youth were an integral part in the planning and organization of the meeting.

It was the children who proposed the theme of the encounter, "Happy are those who seek peace." They also agreed that teenagers should be participants as well, so teens were added to the planning committee. Together they suggested the activities, the speakers, and the time and place of the meeting.

Development of the Encounter

The encounter itself took place in Montevideo on Sunday, December 2, 2001, beginning at 10 A.M. and ending at

5:30 P.M. Using the facilities of the Methodist Church of San Pablo and the neighboring Crandon Institute, 198 participants and 30 adults spent the day together. They represented the Methodist, Anglican, and Waldensian churches, the Salvation Army, the Ecumenical Community of the Barrio Borro neighborhood, and a mission outreach called the House That Belongs to Everyone.

The encounter began with presentations of songs, dances, and cheers by the different groups who had gathered in Crandon's large patio. This was followed by several recreational activities, which helped the participants get acquainted with one other. Two members of the organizational committee, Juan Damián and Heber Cardoso, then introduced the theme of peace.

More than 220 participants came from different church backgrounds and social contexts. For some of them, talking about peace was not unusual, almost commonplace. For others it was more difficult, since aggression was part of their daily experience.

Sharing together continued around the tables during lunch, which was prepared by the different participating churches. After lunch, everyone had an opportunity to participate in a variety of workshops in which all participants could express their dreams and concepts of peace

through different artwork and creative writing.

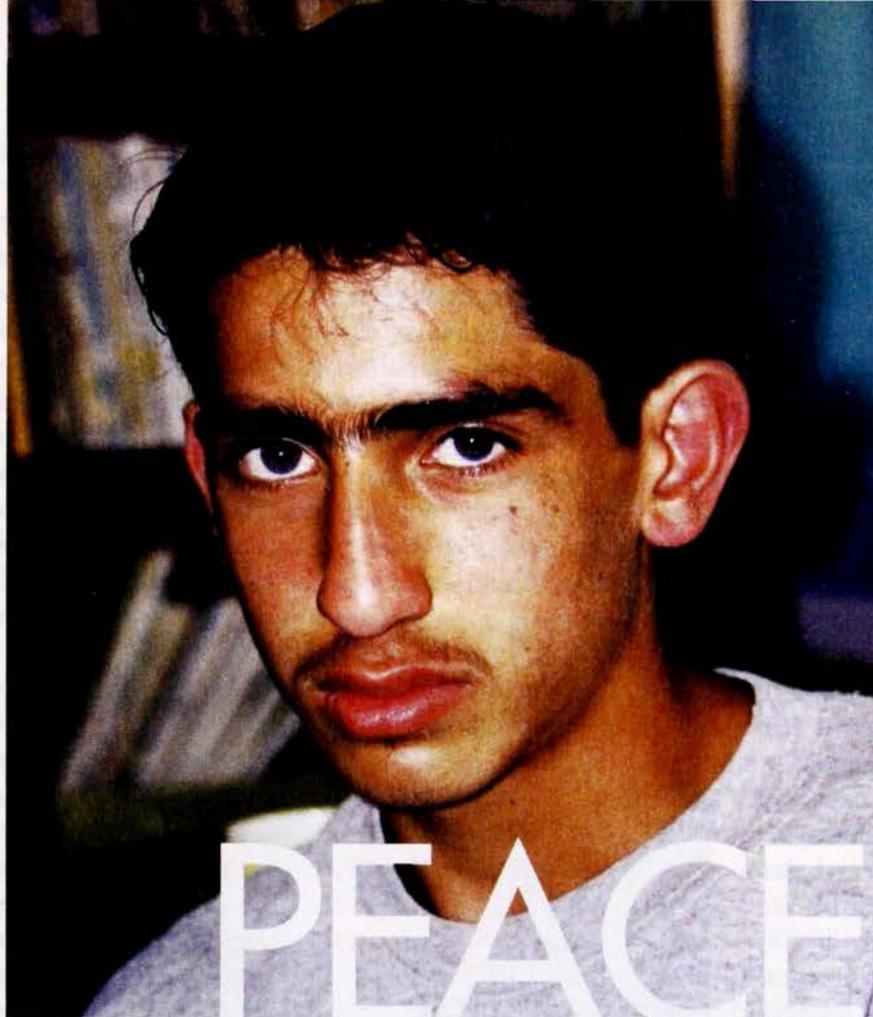
The event closed with participants coming back together in groups, singing and sharing the concepts and thoughts about peace that they had created in the workshops. The experience was not an easy one, but it had positive results. The evaluations indicated that it would have been better if the children and the teenagers could have had separate activities.

We are grateful to God for the challenge and response we found in this encounter. It is important to note that the participants came from different social contexts and from different church experiences. Some of the teenagers also provided leadership for the different workshops.

We believe that this process must continue, bearing in mind the needs of the people who work with children and who live outside the capital city. We also believe that additional concerns should be incorporated, depending on the situations that the children in the different churches face each day.

Top: Participants in the Uruguayan Ecumenical Encounter, "Happy are those who seek peace," at Crandon Institute in San Pablo in Montevideo, Uruguay.

Juan Gattinoni is a regional secretary for the Latin America Council of Churches.



PEACE

for PALESTINIAN BOYS at HOPE SCHOOL

by Mel Lehman

It was not surprising that the Palestinian boys I spoke with in May 2002 at the Hope School in Beit Jala on the West Bank thought that there was little they could do to work for peace. After all, they had been awakened at four o'clock that morning by the sounds of Israeli tanks arriving to occupy the area outside their school, and they had not been able to go back to sleep. Because of the strict military curfew, there were just a handful of them at the school; all the rest of the students and teachers were not in class because they could not leave their homes. If they walked outside, there was a chance they would be shot.

Students' Views

What was remarkable was the boys' enduring vision for a better world, even if the soldiers and guns outside the door made achieving that dream seem a long way off. "We'd like peace; we'd like to live like a family, all over the world," Kosay Altakroury told me, using the English he is studying in school. "I think we have to start with loving each other. It doesn't matter [about] the color of the person's skin, or where he comes from, or what his religion is. All people are the same. God wants us to be like a family, to love each other and work together, and the most important thing is justice."

But even as Kosay held fast to his dream of a better world, he was acutely aware of the hard times in which he lives. He said that on television he sees how people in the United States and the United Kingdom are free to come and go as they wish and how that lifestyle contrasted with the curfew in Beit Jala. He is a dormitory student, and at one point he had been unable for a whole month to return to his home in another part of the West Bank to see his family. Because of the military situation, he didn't think there was much he could do to work for peace. After all, he couldn't even go outside his school.

Above: Noman Fatafta

Kosay's brother, Anan Altakroury, echoed his feelings that there wasn't much they could do to work for peace at the moment in Palestine, given the Israeli occupation. But he thought people in other parts of the world could help. "I think outside Palestine maybe the kids and young people can do something," he told me. "They can write to their government, they can talk to the United Nations. Maybe the United Nations can help us. But it's not working here very well," he concluded.

Another student, Noman Fatafta, said this was a difficult time for him. "I'm confused," he admitted to me. "I don't know what to do. Because of the situation, the army is coming with the tanks, the teachers are not coming, and we cannot receive a good education."

Kosay also said he thought people in other parts of the world could help. "I think all the people all around the world can do something like talking to their president, putting pressure on the government, talking with the Israeli government to make peace."

"And what can *you* do to work for peace?" I asked. "I think we can

just pray, pray to God to make peace over here, nothing else, really," Kosay replied.

Hope Secondary School

Hope Secondary School is located in Beit Jala, a small town just west of Bethlehem. Beit Jala means the "House of Flowers" in a Persian language, and the town is named after King Jael of biblical times. King David lived on one of its mountains, and, as a boy, fought his famous battle with Goliath just behind the school.

The school began in 1962 as the Mennonite School for Boys. Its primary purpose was to provide quality education to underprivileged Palestinian boys, especially orphans. The Mennonites ran the school until 1976 when, in accordance with Mennonite missions policy, they turned over control to a local Palestinian Christian board. At that time, the students voted to change the name to Hope Secondary School, and they chose the symbol of praying hands to represent the school. Girls were then admitted to the school. Since that time, Hope Secondary School has lived up to its name, giving hope to

hundreds of Palestinian students, grades 7 to 12, who otherwise would have none.

Hope School has 120 students who come from many regions of Palestine and Israel. Most are very poor, unable to afford even basic academic needs such as textbooks, notebooks, pens, and pencils. Some are physically or mentally challenged and are unable to study in public schools. Classes at Hope are relatively small (15 to 25 per class compared to typical public school classes of 50 to 60 students), so teachers are able to give students individualized attention. The curriculum includes business courses—economics, bookkeeping, accounting, typing (in English and Arabic), computers, secretarial skills, business administration, and marketing—in addition to academic classes such as English, Arabic, science, math, and Christian education. Hope School provides its students with the skills they need to make a better life for themselves and their families.

Hope Secondary School also teaches students about Christ and Christian principles. Seventy percent of the students are Christians and



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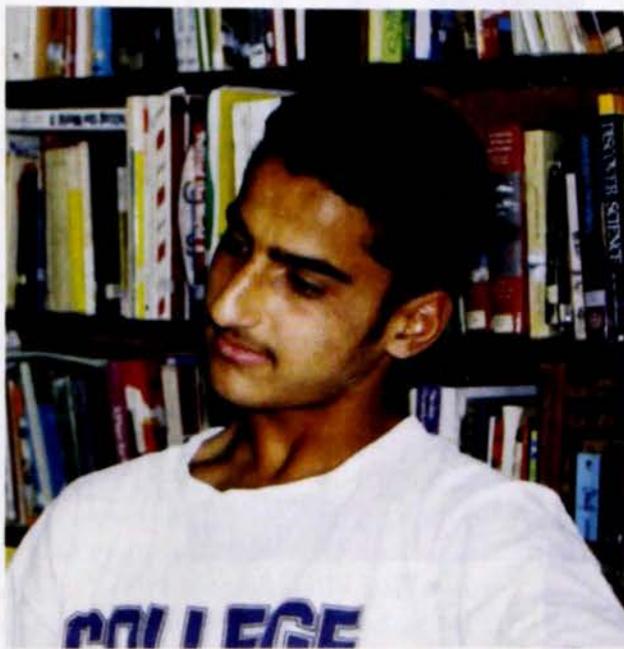
the rest are Muslim. A primary goal is to teach them to live, work, and study peacefully together. Israeli Jews sometimes visit the school, and Hope's students interact with them. The school is a partner in the Peres Center for Peace, based in Tel Aviv, and students are involved in cultural exchange programs with Israeli children. In this way, the school administration hopes to build peace among these students and thereby to reach the adult community as well.

Hope School is not funded by any single organization but by individual sponsors around the world. The United Methodist Church has played an important role in running the school, especially with financial help. Because most of the students are very poor, they pay less than 10 percent (approximately \$25 per year) of their tuition costs. Up to 32 students also live at the school, receiving room and board as well as clothing and personal items. The funding for them is a burden upon the school, which is shared by friends in Christian ministry.

Rami Al Entary graduated from Hope Secondary School in 1998. Approximately five years before, he had been involved in an accident that left him partially paralyzed and unable to speak clearly, read, or write. With physical therapy, he learned to walk with crutches, read, and write. However, he could not write quickly enough to finish examinations in the allotted time. Therefore, a proctor would sit with him and Rami would dictate the answers to the test questions. The proctor would write exactly what Rami dictated. In this way, Rami was able to finish his education and pass his government examinations. In a public school, he would not have had that individualized attention and would not

have been able to complete his schooling.

Qusai, another student, severely broke his right leg when he was only 3 years old, and it was never set properly. He wears a brace in order to walk. The brace often rubbed against his skin where the bone protruded, causing great pain and skin ulcers. In 2001, he missed a lot of school because of a bone infection in the leg. Finally, his doctors decided to operate to straighten the



Opposite, p. 28: These Palestinian students were the only students present at Hope School when this photo was taken. An Israeli military curfew prevented them from leaving the school grounds. Above: Anan Altakoury

leg. Because of the high risk of infection, Qusai could not return to school on a daily basis. Instead, his teachers prepared lessons for him to complete at home each week, thus enabling him to keep up with his class.

Mohammed Taneineh is a boarding student from the Hebron area. His home is made of mud brick and has no indoor plumbing. Beds are simply mattresses on the floor. He prefers to be at Hope Secondary School where he can get three good meals a day and has a

warm bed. Since he cannot afford pens, pencils, notebooks, and other study materials, the school gives them to him free of charge. Without contributions from organizations, such as The United Methodist Church, none of these students would receive a good education. The 120 students are grateful for the help they receive, and they go on to make better lives for themselves and for their families.

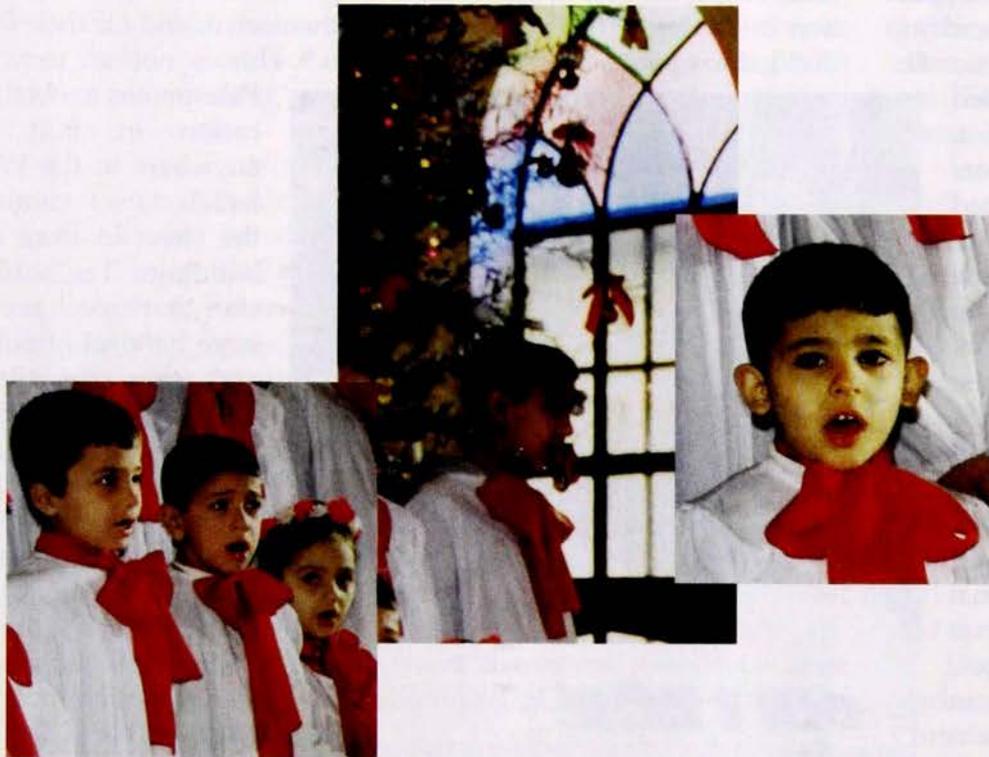
This is not an easy time for Palestinians to obtain an education in Beit Jala or anywhere in the West Bank. Israeli tanks rumble down the street in front of school buildings. The students and staff at Hope have found a large handful of bullet shells and other projectiles on the school grounds. Sometimes, because of the strict military curfews that keep people in their houses, the boarding students go for days at a time without teachers, so they have to study on their own. In addition, seemingly endless Israeli military incursions and curfews have severely disrupted the economy of the West Bank, making the poverty of some of the students even more severe.

Despite the problems, Hope School, on a hill overlooking Christ's birthplace, continues Christ's work of bringing hope to the impoverished and disabled.

Mel Lehman is a freelance writer and frequent traveler to the Middle East. Additional material provided by Solomon Nour.

HOPE SECONDARY SCHOOL
IS AN ADVANCE PROJECT ELIGIBLE
FOR SECOND-MILE GIVING.
Hope Secondary School,
Advance # 012018-6RA.

ANGELS IN IRAQ



by Mel Lehman

I saw angels in Iraq during my most recent trip there in December 2001. They were real, live, flesh-and-blood angels, at least as portrayed by the children of the Protestant Church of Baghdad in their annual Christmas pageant. As I watched the program with several hundred Iraqi Protestant Christians, it almost seemed that it could have been a Christmas pageant in the United States.

There were the little shepherds wearing robes and sneakers, keeping watch over their flocks by night. And there were the little angels, complete with cardboard wings, nervously but bravely

reciting their lines that announced the Good News of Christ's birth.

But beside the fact that this Christmas pageant was in Arabic, there was one other much more important difference. The children in this Christmas pageant are part of a "lost generation" of Iraqi children whose lives have been ravaged by 12 years of economic sanctions imposed by the United Nations. The sanctions were put in place until Saddam Hussein, Iraq's president, complied with the terms of the Gulf War cease-fire agreement. The terms have still not been met. At least half a million children have died. Many of those still

living are stunted; they will never achieve their full potential height because of malnutrition.

The Protestants of Iraq, who generally consider themselves Presbyterian, number only several thousand out of a total of more than 750,000 Christians in the country. As members of a small but devout Christian minority, they are firmly grounded in their faith that ultimately there is Good News in the universe. But on a daily basis, most of the news for

Above: Members of the children's choir of the Protestant Church of Baghdad sing at a Christmas service.

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these children, and for all the Muslim and Christian children of Iraq, is very bad indeed. Those children who manage to survive the meager diets and woefully inadequate health-care system face a future without hope.

No Good News

According to the UNICEF office in Baghdad, one in three Iraqi children has chronic malnutrition. One in every eight dies before his or her first birthday, and the child mortality rate has gone up two and a half times in the last decade.

The news is not good from the doctors of Iraq. The medical personnel I spoke with said repeatedly that the United Nations' Oil for Food Program is just not working. The program has helped to increase food availability to some extent, but there are still major shortages, as not enough medicines and medical equipment make their way in a timely manner through the complicated international labyrinth that makes up the Oil for Food Program. This trip, I met with the Iraqi minister of health, Dr. Umid Midhat Mubarak. He said that what Iraq really needs are doctors to come and teach. It also needs nursing instructors. Iraqis can't get what they really need simply by going on the Web. He proposed short teaching visits of two or three weeks.

And the news is not good from the allegedly wise men of Washington, who keep trying to inflict yet another war on the children of Iraq, despite the fact that it is now clear that Iraq had nothing to do with the anthrax scare of 2001. And it seems equally clear that there is no substantial link between Iraq and the terrorist attacks of September 11. In fact, according to the February 6, 2002, *New York Times*, "The Central Intelligence

Agency has no evidence that Iraq has engaged in terrorist operations against the United States in nearly a decade, and the agency is also convinced that President Saddam Hussein has not provided chemical or biological weapons to Al Qaeda or related terrorist groups, according to several American intelligence officials."

The US Obsession with Iraq

Are there weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, as the United States maintains? I have no idea. I travel there for humanitarian reasons, and I make it a point not to ask about political or military matters when I'm there. But I have spent a total of more than three months in Iraq studying the effects of the sanctions during the course of six trips, and I know very well what it feels like to be an American alone in Iraq. It feels okay. I clearly don't "look Iraqi"; I'm tall and blond and of Swiss ancestry, but I've never personally been afraid.

I've occasionally had a government "minder," and at other times, I'm often in the company of Iraqi church and humanitarian staff. But for much of the time, I've been on my own, free to wander the streets of Baghdad, and I've never once been afraid or felt that the people there wanted to hurt me—or, for that matter, wanted to hurt my friends and family back in the United States. What they basically want is for the United States to leave them alone, a view they share with quite a few other people in the region.

But obsessively, compulsively, the United States simply cannot seem to turn the page on Iraq, as most people around the world clearly now think we



should. More specifically, we can't turn the page on Saddam Hussein. He's all our news media ever talk about and we're so focused on him that we forget that there are 22 million other people in Iraq, including the Protestant children's choir.

Christmas Canceled

I happened to be in Baghdad in December 1998 and somehow managed to survive four nights of American and British bombing. A week later, at Christmas, it was explained to me that because of the "situation," public celebrations of Christmas would be avoided that year.

Thus, it came as a great surprise and joy for me a few days after Christmas to see a large tree—unmistakably a Christmas tree—in the middle of Abu Anwas Boulevard as I rode along the Tigris River in a taxi. "So Christmas hasn't been entirely forgotten here after all," I said.

My Arab Christian colleagues from the Middle Eastern Council of Churches explained to me that the tree I saw was not a

THE MIDDLE EAST COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

(MECC) is the ecumenical voice of most of the Middle East's Christians. It is an autonomous regional fellowship of 28 church families confessing Jesus Christ as God and Savior. They represent four Christian traditions: Eastern (Oriental) Orthodox, Orthodox, Catholic, and Evangelical (Protestant). The MECC was organized in 1974 to help surmount a past marked by division among Christians and to move toward a future characterized by unity. Through it, member churches strive more effectively to nurture a society that respects religious beliefs and advocates justice, equality, freedom, and peace.

usual Christmas tree. The decorations were pieces of cardboard cut out in the shape of light bulbs, and on each one was written the name of an Iraqi child who had died because of the sanctions. The tree, and others like it, had been put up in front of several United Nations offices in Baghdad. The Iraqis had chosen this Christian symbol to try to get a message through to the "Christian" West.

My colleagues and I stopped at one of the trees and walked over to it. It was covered with little pieces of cardboard decorations in the shape of bulbs. It struck me that they looked like upside-down teardrops. My colleague translated what was written on one of them. On one side it said, "Rishanah Hamed Abadi, 15 months, 1995," and on the other side, "Mohammed Zeidan Khalifah, 2 days, 1994."

Mel Lehman is a frequent traveler to the Middle East, including Iraq, where he examines the impact of economic sanctions on the Iraqi people.



Youth choir sings praises at Christmas service in spite of the hardship of living under economic sanctions.



CHILDREN IN MACEDONIA

by Carol Partridge

Macedonia is a country of contrasts. There are high mountains and fertile valleys; cold, wet winters, and hot, dry summers. In the larger cities, women in stylish business suits walk alongside Muslim women in long dusters and richly colored head scarves. New Mercedes and Audis can be seen on the same streets with horse-drawn wagons. In cities, high-rise apartment buildings offer modern appliances and conveniences. In small villages, women carry jugs of water from a centrally located faucet for drinking, cooking, and washing. Some children live in comfort, while others live in poverty.

Macedonia's Children

Ana is a pretty brown-eyed ten-year-old. Her dark hair is cut in a pixyish style. Ana's grandfather

owns a successful bakery. Her mother completed her university degree in English but does not work outside the home. Her father works in the office of the bakery. Ana takes private English lessons and goes to karate classes.

Monika has long blond hair, brown eyes, and a shy smile. She is nine. Her mother is mentally ill and unable to care for her. Her father left several years ago to go to Germany for work. Monika does not hear from him and he sends no money for her support. She lives with an elderly grandmother whose only income is a pension of \$50 a month.

Laze is eleven, with straight brown hair and an impish grin. His father has been unemployed for as long as Laze can remember. His mother, who completed a two-year college degree, works five days a week as a cleaning woman. She

makes less than \$100 a month. Laze, his mother, father, and younger sister live with his father's parents, as is traditional in Macedonia. Laze's parents sacrifice to provide the family with adequate clothes, shoes, and school supplies.

To have peace, people need to stop fighting, to stop having wars. Instead they should have love for each other—and hope. Then they will have happiness. I would help people to have peace by being obedient and by telling them to be obedient, too.

Laze, boy, age 11

Ali is seven. He is a Roma (Romany, or Gypsy). Most mornings his mother sends him out onto the streets of the city to beg for money. He is dressed in tattered clothes. His family lives in a makeshift house of wood, sheets of plastic, and tin. They had a sturdier

house, but last winter the city tore it down, along with other houses of their Romany neighbors, in order to sell the city-owned property on which they were built. Ali does not go to school; by law he should, but no one in authority is especially concerned.

Goran is sixteen and lives in a village. There is a primary school in the village, but to attend high school, Goran travels to a city an hour away. He stays in a dorm Monday through Friday and goes home by bus on the weekends during the school year. He shares a room with eight students. In the summer he works especially hard in the fields, helping his family to earn the \$1000 or \$2000 that will see them through the year.

Living in Macedonia

Macedonia is a poor country; unemployment is nearly 38 percent. Many who have jobs are underemployed

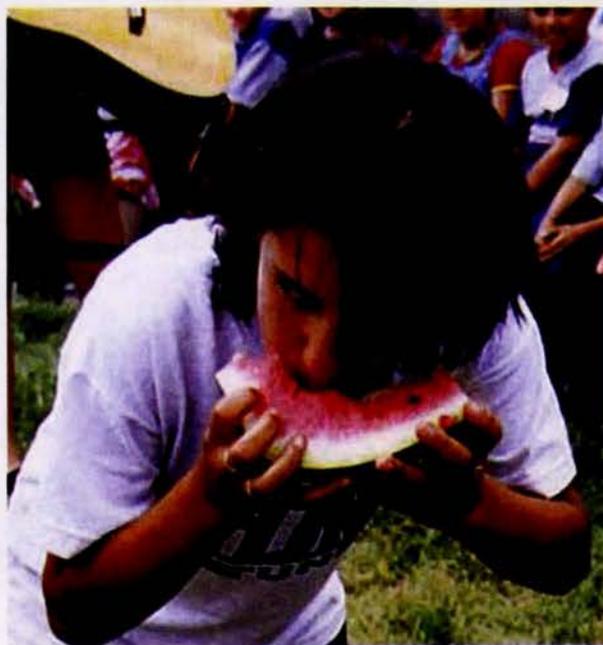
To have peace, people should respect each other, love each other, and spend time with each other. If there were peace they would not shoot each other...there would be no hungry children, no barefoot children, no children without parents.

To help people live in peace, I would give them food and clothes; I would love them; I would behave in a nice way toward them.

Snezana, girl, age 10

for their skill or educational level. University graduates work as sales clerks in small boutiques and corner groceries. Salaries are typically \$100 to \$200 a month. Successful business people are in evidence as well. A recent advertising campaign sponsored by the government encouraged business people to pay their taxes because many new entrepreneurs don't. With a poor economy and unpaid taxes, public services are inadequate or nonexistent. Public buildings such as hospitals, schools, and libraries are ill-equipped and in disrepair.

Slavic Macedonian families usually have two children, while



Watermelon was a favorite snack at the United Methodist Vacation Bible School in Macedonia.

Romany and Muslim families may be larger. Male children are often preferred over female children because a son traditionally brings home a daughter-in-law who will care for her husband's parents in their old age. Boys receive preferential treatment, but many girls also go on to higher education. There are many female doctors, lawyers, professors, and engineers. In the cities, most Macedonian women work outside the home, but they are still, as a rule, expected to assume all the responsibilities of child care and homemaking. In the villages, women generally work in the homes and in the fields, while men only work in the fields.

Health care suffers because hospitals are poorly equipped and have poor sanitation practices. Patients wait a long time for treatment. Many children are without insurance. Many employers simply do not pay benefits for their employees. Many people who are self-employed, especially small farmers, cannot afford to pay benefits for health insurance.

Young people are discouraged about their prospects for the future. Some do not bother to go to university; some hardly look for work,

accepting that there is little within their control. Some turn to drugs in an effort to salve their disappointments.

Visas are hard to obtain and Macedonians must have a visa for nearly every country to which they might travel—even Greece, their southern neighbor. Many young people long for a visa, even a tourist visa, for countries such as the United States, Canada, Australia, or Germany, where they might find well-paid employment.

Those few fortunate enough to obtain visas usually leave Macedonia to work—even if they will be working without proper documentation—and they never return. The drain of bold, bright, and well-educated minds impacts Macedonia's future.

Methodists in Macedonia

The United Methodist Church has a rich history in Macedonia; its roots extend back to the 1860s, when missionaries from the United States first came to what is now southeastern Macedonia. At that time, Macedonia was part of the Turkish Empire, or Ottoman Empire. The most famous missionary was Ellen Stone from Chelsea, Massachusetts. She and Mrs. Tsilka, the wife of an Albanian pastor, were kidnapped in September 1901 by peasant soldiers who were hoping to drive out the occupying Turks. They needed money for weapons and ammunition for their cause. Miss Stone and Mrs. Tsilka were held until February 1902, when more than \$60,000 in ransom was paid for their release.

The 13 United Methodist congregations now active in Macedonia are the legacy of Miss Stone and other missionaries, some of whom remained through the Balkan Wars in 1912 and 1913 and

into the 1920s. They gave Bible lessons and led worship services, taught women to read, opened a school for girls and an orphanage, and offered basic health care.

Although United Methodists in Macedonia number only about 6000 today, less than half of one percent of the population, the church has become a more visible presence since Boris Trajkovski, an attorney and United Methodist lay pastor, was elected President of Macedonia in 1999. The United Methodist churches in Macedonia offer Sunday school classes for children, youth group meetings and classes, and youth and children's choirs. The church in Strumica, site of the headquarters for The United Methodist Church in Macedonia, offers a Saturday class for children, teaching Bible lessons and beginning English. Because it is on Saturday, the class attracts children who do not already attend Sunday school. Two of the congregations, Kochani and Drachevo, include a large percentage of Romany people.

Each summer, with funding from HEKS, a Swiss humanitarian



A Sunday school class in the United Methodist Church in Strumica, Macedonia.

Summer also means Vacation Bible School (VBS) for more than 200 participants. Children from the neighborhoods where VBS is held join in along with those who are already part of the church congregation. No fee is charged for any of the children. A week-long youth camp is organized in August for about 70 young people between the ages of 15 and 26. Those who are able pay a small amount. When possible, youth from different countries and ethnic groups are invited to attend the summer camp along with the Macedonian youth. Although problems with visas and passports or other difficulties arise, the goal is for the camp to be a multiethnic experience where tolerance and acceptance are taught.

Also located in Strumica is the Miss Stone Center. Although its primary outreach is a Meals on Wheels program, the center also offers support for disabled children and their parents. It is a gathering place for occasional "Bible Fun Days" for children and fellowship activities, such as New Year's Eve parties, for youth.

The United Methodist Church in Macedonia distributes humanitarian aid when it is available

and, when possible, helps individuals, especially children, in need of special medicines or medical care.

A Place for Everyone

Macedonia is a country struggling with many problems—economic, political, and social. In the midst of those struggles, children like Ana, Monika, Laze, Ali, and Goran bless The United Methodist Church with their unique presence—some for a moment and others on a regular basis. Ana enjoys the crafts and Bible stories at the Saturday class in Strumica. For Monika, the church is a second home, the place she comes when her grandmother is sick or when she needs help with homework. Laze attends Sunday school and Vacation Bible School. The church bought wood for Ali and his family last winter when temperatures were below freezing. Goran sees his grandfather receive Meals on Wheels from the Miss Stone Center. The church is privileged to touch these and many other children's lives, in words and actions, with the hope of the Gospel and the comfort and encouragement of Jesus' love.

Carol Partridge is a GBGM missionary assigned to The United Methodist Church of Macedonia in Strumica.

all people have work and rest, there will be peace. To have peace, people can help each other—they can clean and wash dishes and dust. They can help with jobs at home. Everyone can do a part.

I would help people to believe in God and to be faithful—that would help them to live in peace.

Ruzica, girl, age 7

organization, The United Methodist Church in Macedonia organizes a camp for developmentally disabled children from a state-run residential school in the village of Novo Selo, located close to Strumica. Youth from the Strumica UMC participate in the camp as assistants to the school staff, organizing games and other activities for the children. Many of these school children are without parents, and the summer camp is their only opportunity for an excursion.

Children in France

How to Bring Peace to the World

Interviews by Beryl Goldberg

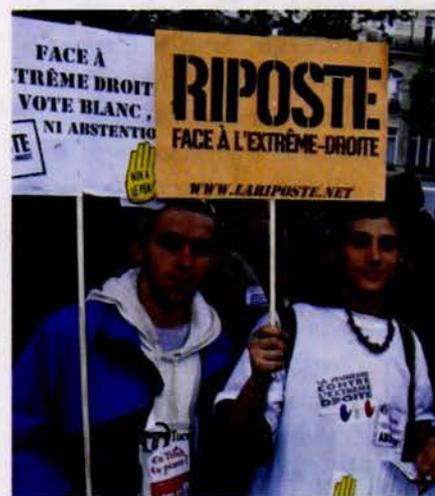
One Sunday morning I interviewed children at the Evangelic Methodist Church (Eglise Evangelique Methodiste) in Genevilliers, France, after they participated in the first part of the worship service. The church has 55 adult members and 30 children. Most of the congregants are from Haiti, Côte d'Ivoire, and Burkina Faso. Some were born in France. The church was founded in 1927 and, as its pastor, the Rev. Pierre Geiser said, it has had its ups and

downs. Lay pastors from Haiti and Côte d'Ivoire assist Pastor Geiser. At this time, the congregation is in the process of repairing the church building.

One core group in the church came from a Methodist community in Haiti. They asked the British Methodist Church in London to help them find a Methodist church near Paris. According to Pastor Geiser, "One of our main goals is to have a church where people of different origins can pray together. People must learn



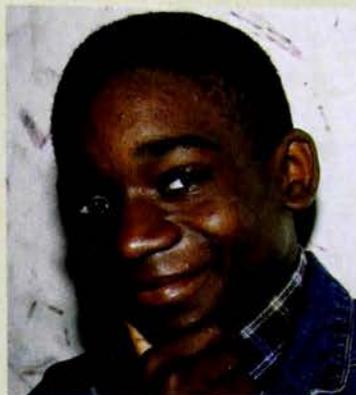
Families gather for worship outside the Methodist Church in Genevilliers, France.



Demonstrators in Paris speak out against Jean-Marie Le Pen and the National Front party.

how others live, how they behave and react, to begin to understand each other. The people who come to this church realize that people of different ethnicities can work together. They can see that there are not big differences between them."

Some members of the congregation work in painting, building maintenance, or restaurants. The children I interviewed were all immigrants whose parents may or may not have the legal right to live and work in France. Pastor Geiser explained to me that many of them have marginal jobs paying low salaries. It is a difficult time for immigrants in France. The numbers of the unemployed



You must pray and write and draw so people will read what you think. You must punish people when they do bad things. We can ask people why they want to make war; what value does it serve; what's the use of going to war?

Nadine Roman

We should end military weapons and then speak to the governments of all countries.

David Belfont

If we could destroy the weapons we would be able to defend ourselves.

Samuel Louis

We should all have to pay a tax so we could heal people in need. Then we would be going hand-in-hand to stop going to war.

Rony Jean-Simon

The wage of sin is death. If they keep doing this, it will break Jesus' heart.

All together, we are going to succeed in changing the world. To the TV, we can say this: Stop.

Nicholas Louis

We can ask the president for a certificate of peace for the people who stop wars. We can all be together in school. There are children who fight. We can go to them to stop them and separate them. We will explain to them that it isn't good to fight. We will make peace between them.

But we will also give thanks to God for the eternal life of Jesus.

We can ask Jesus to speak to the people and tell them to calm down and make peace together. We can form an association to aid people who are at war.

Stephan St. Paul

are rising and the far right, which blames many of France's problems on the increasing numbers of immigrants, at times seems to be on the brink of obtaining power. Just recently, Jean-Marie Le Pen, head of the National Front, a political party on the far right, came in

second in the first round of presidential voting. "Massive immigration has only just begun," said Le Pen in a BBC interview. "It is the biggest problem facing France, England, and probably the world." Le Pen's success led to massive demonstrations across

France, and he was defeated in the next round of voting. Still, the economy in France is troubled, which leads to continuing problems for France's immigrants.

Beryl Goldberg is a freelance photographer based in New York City.

Mission Memo

Holistic Strategy Development for Africa

The Consultation on Holistic Strategy for Africa held in Dakar, Senegal, in early September, challenged The United Methodist Church to meet the physical and spiritual needs of Africa's people and to develop long-term strategies to change the systems that perpetuate injustice.

The 60 participants at the consultation included staff members of general boards and agencies, as well as United Methodist bishops and lay members from Africa, Asia, and the United States. They will ask the United Methodist Council of Bishops to sponsor an inventory of church work in the African and Asian central conferences to assess the current ministries and needs that are not being met. The findings will be reported to the Council of Bishops by the Holistic Strategy Task Force in San Juan, Puerto Rico, in November, and will be used to increase effectiveness, accountability, and coordination by different agencies in developing long-term strategies for ministry in Africa.

Nominee for GBGM General Secretary

The Rev. Randy Day was introduced to the GBGM Personnel Committee in September and presented to GBGM's board of directors in October as the nominee for the position of general secretary. The directors will, in turn, place his nomination before the General Council on Ministries for action at its fall meeting. If selected to serve as general secretary, the Rev. Day will assume his duties on January 1, 2003. The Rev. Day was recommended by the GBGM Search Committee from a broad field of candidates.

The Rev. Day has served GBGM since September 2000 as the deputy general secretary assigned to the Evangelization and Church Growth and Community and Institutional Ministries program areas. Prior to joining GBGM, he served as a pastor in Connecticut and New York, and from 1984 to 1990, as a district superintendent in New York City. Day has extensive experience in mission and currently serves on the World Methodist Council's executive committee.

He earned his bachelor's degree from Silliman University in the Philippines, with a major in sociology and a certificate in Southeast Asian Studies. He attended Illinois Wesleyan University with a major in religion. In 1972, Day completed his master of divinity degree at Yale Divinity School in New Haven, Connecticut, with emphases in World Religions, Missions, and Southeast Asian studies.

UMCOR Disaster Responses

In response to massive floods in Bangladesh, India, and

Nepal, UMCOR has partnered with Action by Churches Together (ACT) to provide disaster relief in all three countries. Needed in Bangladesh is \$138,000; in India, \$1 million to aid 10,000 families, as well as \$50,000 for blankets and kitchen utilities; and in Nepal, \$72,000 to aid the people suffering the most from the onslaught of natural disasters. Use the International Disaster Response number and designate donations for Bangladesh, India, and Nepal. Advance #982450-8.

UMCOR has sent an emergency grant to Swaziland to feed children in 26 schools. In addition to hunger-relief efforts for the school children, resources are needed to respond to other conditions caused by the food crisis there. Contributions may be made through your church to the Churchwide Appeal for the Southern Africa Famine, Advance #101250-4.

Laotian and Vietnamese Christian Leaders School in Cambodia

During September 2002, a two-week school for pastors and lay leaders from Laos and Vietnam was held in Cambodia, led by GBGM staff, United Methodist missionaries assigned to Vietnam, and members of the Hmong Association of United Methodists. The United Methodist Mission in Cambodia has more than 50 established congregations and another 40 preaching points.

Churches Oppose Military Action

A letter sent to US President George W. Bush opposing military action against Iraq was written by members of a national coalition, Churches for Middle East Peace, and signed by 48 US Christian leaders. The letter stated that such action could destabilize the Middle East and heighten anti-American sentiment.

DEATHS Roderick F. Dail, retired missionary with more than 4 years of service in India, died October 29, 2001...Robert H. Chappel, retired missionary with 2 years of service in India, died June 1, 2002...Geneva Rubins, retired deaconess with more than 44 years of service in the United States, died June 16, 2002...Muriel C. Pilley, retired missionary with 26 years of service in Sarawak, China, and Malaysia died July 11, 2002...Garnet Ertel, retired deaconess with more than 22 years of service in the United States, died August 4, 2002...Maria M. Slade, retired missionary with 32 years of service in South Africa, died August 5, 2002...Juel Nordby, retired missionary with 19 years of service in Angola and the Congo, died August 12, 2002...James H. Snead, former longtime director of the United Methodist Men's program, died September 11, 2002.

EAST TIMOR

Photo Essay by John Chamberlin



Inset: Village children in East Timor, where the people's incomes are the lowest in Asia. Background: Lake Bahamori



A boy sleeps at the tais market. Tais is a hand-woven cloth.

UMCOR sponsors the Protestant Church in East Timor (Igreja Protestante iha Timor Lorosa'e) through the Rural Lay Preachers Training Program. The lay preachers are the pillars of the Protestant church in East Timor. After the East Timorese people voted in favor of independence in the UN-sponsored referendum in 1999, the Indonesia military and proxy militias caused massive destruction in the country. At least 250,000 people fled the border to West Timor. Half the people of the church and many pastors fled. Today, the 17 ordained pastors of the church who remain function as district superintendents overseeing the work of the rural lay preachers.



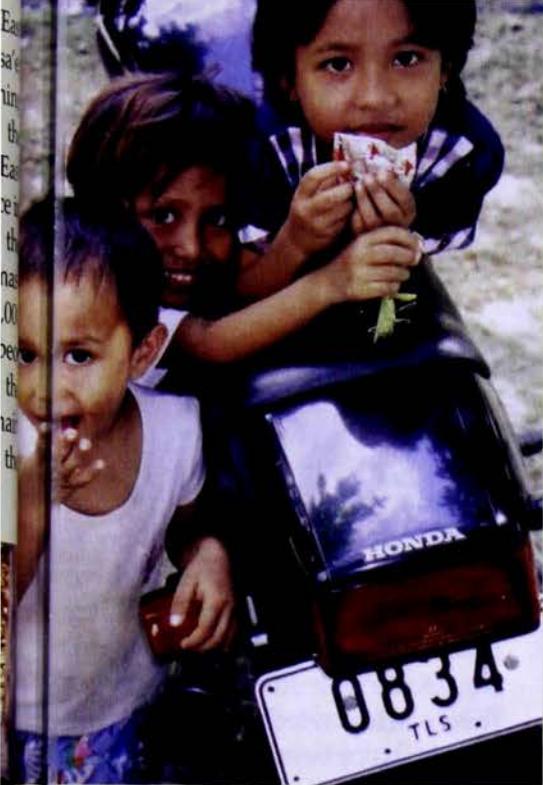
Gravestones for infants in Venilale. East Timor has one of the world's highest infant mortality rates.



Pastor Moses da Silva, Protestant Church in East Timor, takes his three children to school.



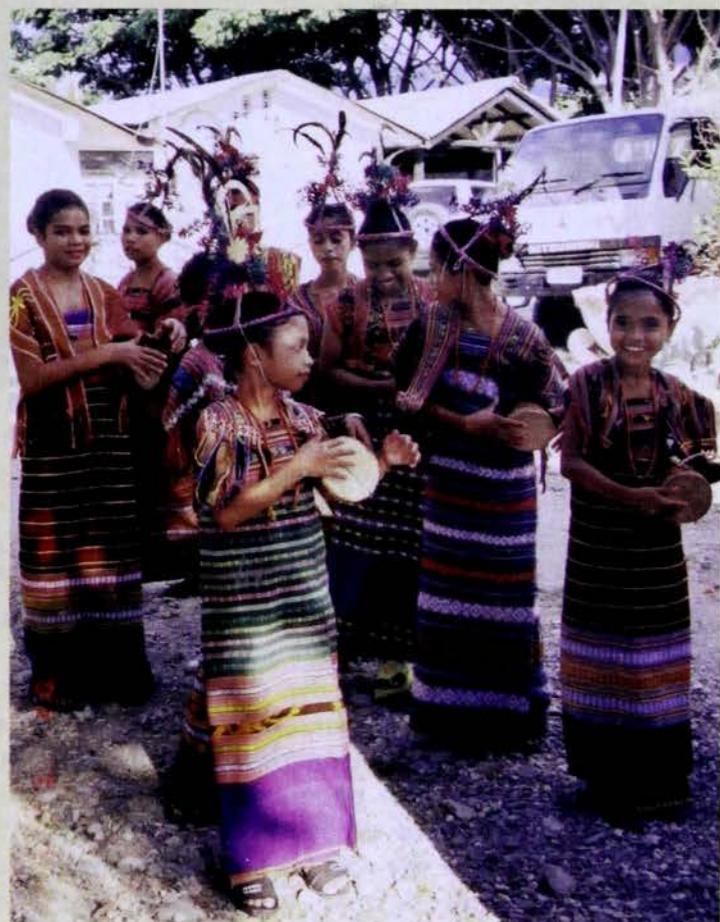
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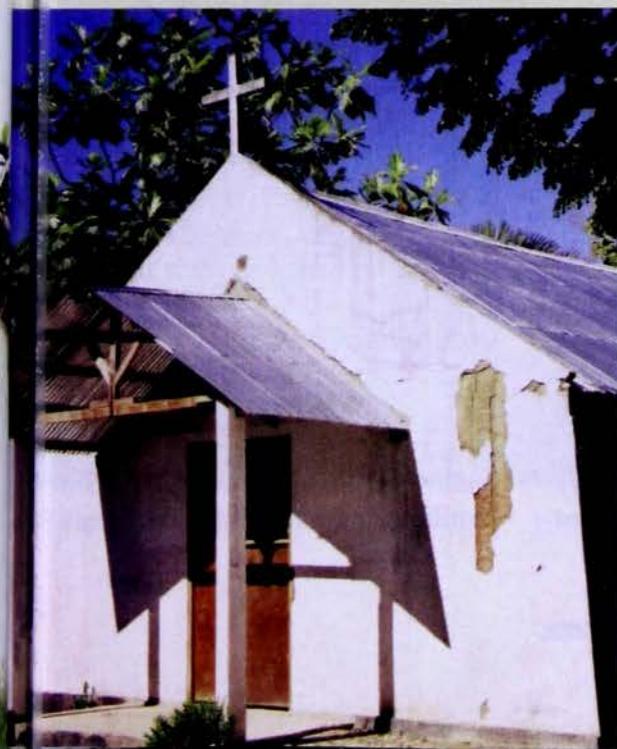
Above: An English class at the Salsian Sisters' Girls' School in Venilale taught by an Australian volunteer. Many of the students receive scholarship help from East Timor Religious Outreach. On the subject of world peace, they said: "Stop the violence, stop war, love, respect other people, forgive, reconcile, stop discrimination against women, listen to the needs of others, provide education, respect human rights, peace comes with justice, and the leaders of the nations must help people, particularly the poor."



Beneficiaries of East Timor Religious Outreach scholarships at the Ekaristi (Protestant) Church's Marcelo Comoro kindergarten class in Dili.



Children from an orphanage sponsored by the Protestant Church in East Timor celebrate the nation's independence with traditional dancing.



Grace Protestant Church in Akanunu, as seen in 1999 (left), and today (right), rebuilt with the help of the Uniting Church in Australia.

The Rev. John Chamberlin is the National Coordinator of the East Timor Religious Outreach. For more information on this ministry, contact him at Petaluma United Methodist Church in Petaluma, California, 707-762-9785.

INDIA

by J. S. Murthy



One day in Jabalpur, India, I witnessed an exchange between some neighborhood children and an elderly resident named Asha. The children were playing ball near Asha's yard, and several times they missed the ball and it landed in Asha's garden. One of the children would then run through her yard into the garden and grab the ball. One day, Asha had enough of this game. When the ball landed in the garden where she was working, she picked it up.

"Don't you children have any other place to play? Day by day you are spoiling my garden. I will keep your ball and that should teach you all a lesson," said Asha.

"We didn't mean to spoil your garden," protested one of the children, fearing they'd lost the ball.

"Well I can't help what you

meant," Asha retorted. "See the damage you have done."

"We won't do it again, Ms. Asha," pleaded the children. "Please return the ball." Asha took the ball into her house.

But the children did not give up hope. They huddled together and decided to choose from among them a polite and friendly girl named Lata to speak to Asha on their behalf. The next time they saw their neighbor in her garden, Lata approached her and said: "Ms., we are very sorry for what happened. We have decided on a different game that will keep the ball out of your yard. If you will please return the ball, I will take the responsibility to see that it won't be thrown in your garden again."

This offer seemed to satisfy Asha, so she returned the ball. Not

only did the children have their ball, they had succeeded in changing Asha's resolve. Meanwhile, they acknowledged that they should have been more mindful of Asha's property.

The credit for the happy ending must go to Lata. She kept her end of the bargain and made sure the ball didn't stray. In this simple story, we can see how the children, on their own initiative, averted a fight and worked through feelings of resentment to arrive at a peaceful compromise in which both sides felt they had gained something in the exchange.

Blessed Are the Peacemakers

Lata's actions illustrate the verse in the Beatitudes, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God" (Matthew 5:9). The spirit of reconciliation and restoration of broken relationships is a rich legacy that believers have inherited from the Savior's exemplary life. When Jesus spoke the words "Peace be with you" (Luke 24:36) to his confused disciples after his resurrection, their doubts and suspicions disappeared. Instead, calm, confidence, and joy prevailed in their hearts.

Children in India

In India, as in any other country, the circumstances a child encounters while growing up depend greatly on the child's family. Some families have the means to raise



Page 42: Children produce the earthenware used during Diwali (Hindu festival of lights). **Left:** Sunday school children share sweets with local Hindu children.

and educate their children. They provide adequate nutrition, educational opportunities, and religious and cultural grounding in one of the many religions that exist in India. In such families some traditions, however, both cultural and religious, may present particular challenges for India's children.

The birth of a child brings joy to most Indian families, but the birth of a female child may be

regarded as inauspicious and burdensome because she will require a dowry in order to marry. According to this ancient and still current marriage practice, a young woman can be married only if her family pays in cash or in kind the price demanded by the groom's family. A male child will not only keep the family lineage alive, he will bring wealth to the family by claiming a dowry from his wife, and he performs an indispensable religious function at his father's funeral. In the Hindu tradition, only a son may perform the last rites for his father in order to ensure his father's *Moksha* (liberation, or release from the cycle of birth and death). A daughter is prohibited by religious sanctions from performing such rites. As a result of these customs, at times, bitterness and tension prevail in these families.

The Methodist Church in India seeks solutions to the problem of discrimination against women. The medical ministry at the Ida S. Scudder Center for Women and Children at Vellore Christian Medical College and Hospital in Tamil Nadu, not only attends to the physical needs of pregnant women but also offers prayer and emotional support. In the process, the families

involved come to realize that children are a gift from God regardless of their gender, and that all children should be treated with dignity, fairness, and affection.

Many families in India lack the means to nurture and train their children. For them the realities of the new millennium present a dismal picture. Poverty, an age-old social ill, is on the increase. Some statistics put the number of the poor in India at a staggering 600 million! Other statistics say 40 to 50 percent of India's population is poor.

Many of the rural poor migrate to cities looking for food

Dear God, I pray for Peace in the world, Peace to rule in the hearts of people all over the world.

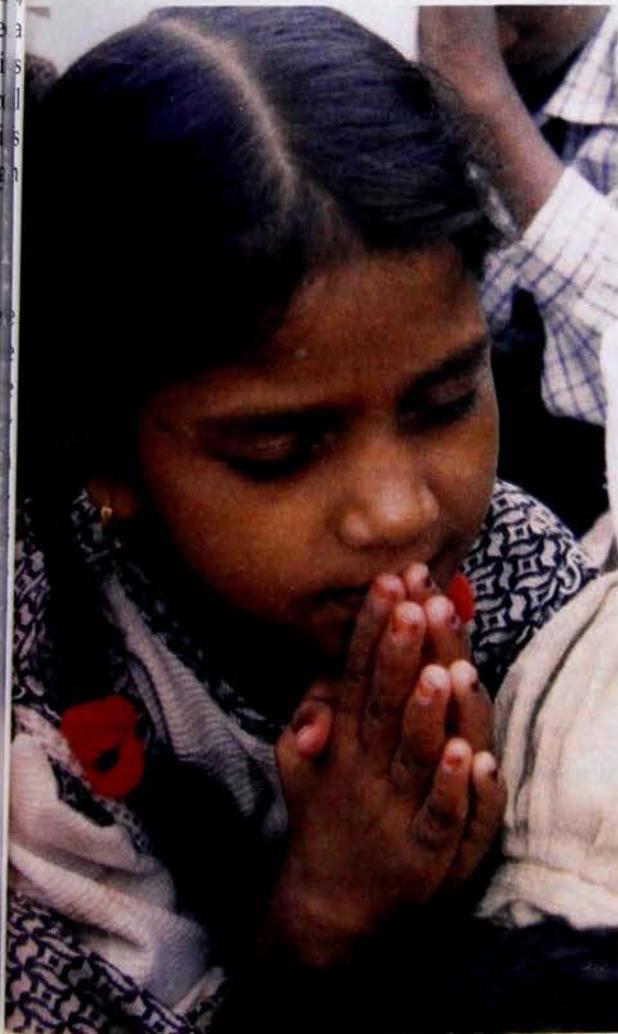
Where there is war, hatred, and fear, where people are suffering, especially little boys and girls, I pray that you will shower your presence on them. Amen.

P is for the Prince of Peace
E is for Eternal Ruler
A is for Almighty God
C is for Christ who has come
E is for Christ to Enter our hearts to give us peace.

Joshua Roy, age 8,
 Jabalpur Sunday school,
 Methodist Church in India.

and work. If they cannot find well-paying jobs, they and their children are forced to live in slums. They are denied even such basic necessities as access to a supply of clean water and facilities for sanitation and cleanliness. They become victims of exploitation by the affluent. The present extension of the free market on a global scale has only aggravated the problem of survival for this vulnerable section of Indian society.

Other problems such as dis-



child in prayer, Methodist Church of India.

crimination, sexual exploitation, and violence suffered by women and children persist. Children living in poverty are more likely to be exploited as soldiers, forced into child labor, and made victims of violence, sexual abuse, and slavery.

The Methodist Church in India

The Methodist Church in India is committed to alleviating people's suffering and reconciling them to God. Inspired by Jesus' sacrifice, the 150-year-old Methodist Church in India with the support of The United Methodist Church, provides many services. These include the rehabilitation of rag-picking children in Bangalore; specialized medical services at the Ida S. Scudder Women's Center, supported by a grant from the Women's Division; ministries with street children in Mumbai and Chennai; and work with some of the estimated 20 million child laborers in Delhi, Kanpur, Hyderabad, and Agra. In Lucknow, the E. Stanley Jones Nur

Projects to Support in India

Many ministries in India can be supported by United Methodists through the Advance for Christ and His Church and through UMW supplemental giving. **The Ida S. Scudder Center for Women and Children: Advance #012434-4**
The Nave Technical Institute Scholarship Fund: Advance #000703-4
Warne Babyfold and Lane School of Mothercraft: Advance #010431-3.

All of the money given through the Advance program supports the projects designated by the donor. Checks may be written to local churches with the Advance # on the check or made out directly to "Advance GCFA" with the project number and sent to: Advance GCFA, P.O. Box 9068, GPO, New York, NY 10087-9068. For credit-card donations, call: 1-888-252-6174.

Manzil Psychiatric Center provides treatment for mentally ill patients. The Warne Babyfold and Lane School of Mothercraft in Bareilly cares for orphaned, unwanted, and abandoned infants and children. The Nave Technical Institute provides technical education for urban and rural youth who cannot afford a traditional education. The church offers ministries with the orphans and school dropouts in Kolkata and with quake-affected children in

Gujarat. The 50-year-old Hawabagh Nursery School continues to operate in Jabalpur.

Christian witness continues in a multicultural and multireligious Indian society in an endeavor to teach children to live in peace and communal harmony in this part of the world.

Dr. J. S. Murthy is a freelance writer for New World Outlook. He lives in Jabalpur, India.

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Christie R. House, Editor, September 20, 2002



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Coming up in the January-February issue of *New World Outlook*...

- **An Introduction to the General Board of Global Ministries' New General Secretary**
- **A Mission Planning Calendar for 2003**
- **More for the Mexico Mission Study**
- **A Special Preview of Global Gathering 2003**

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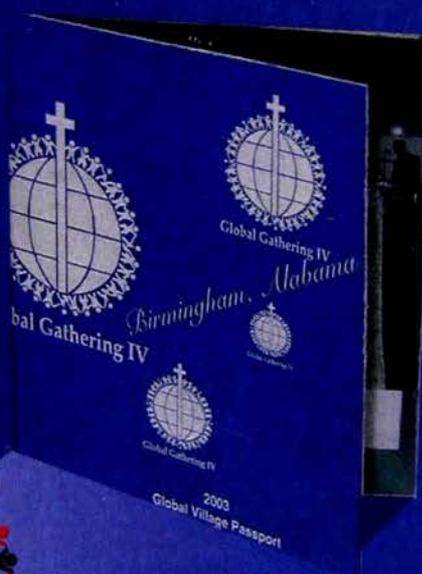
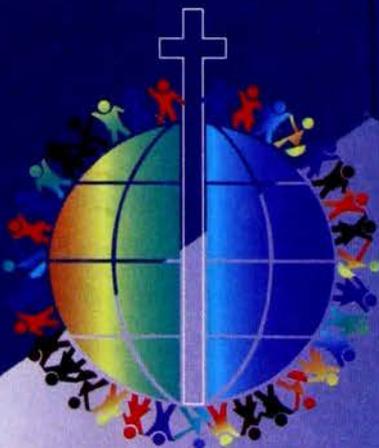
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Come to the gathering of thousands of United Methodists and ecumenical partners for a time of sharing in rich fellowship, learning, and inspiration. You will not want to miss this colorful occasion for celebrating the global mission of the church in many cultures, languages, and traditions. Why not organize a group, take a van, or fill a bus to the **Global Gathering IV In Mission Together!** Follow the excitement as it develops, receive announcements about speakers, activities for youth, and workshops online at: **gbgm-umc.org**

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Global Gathering IV

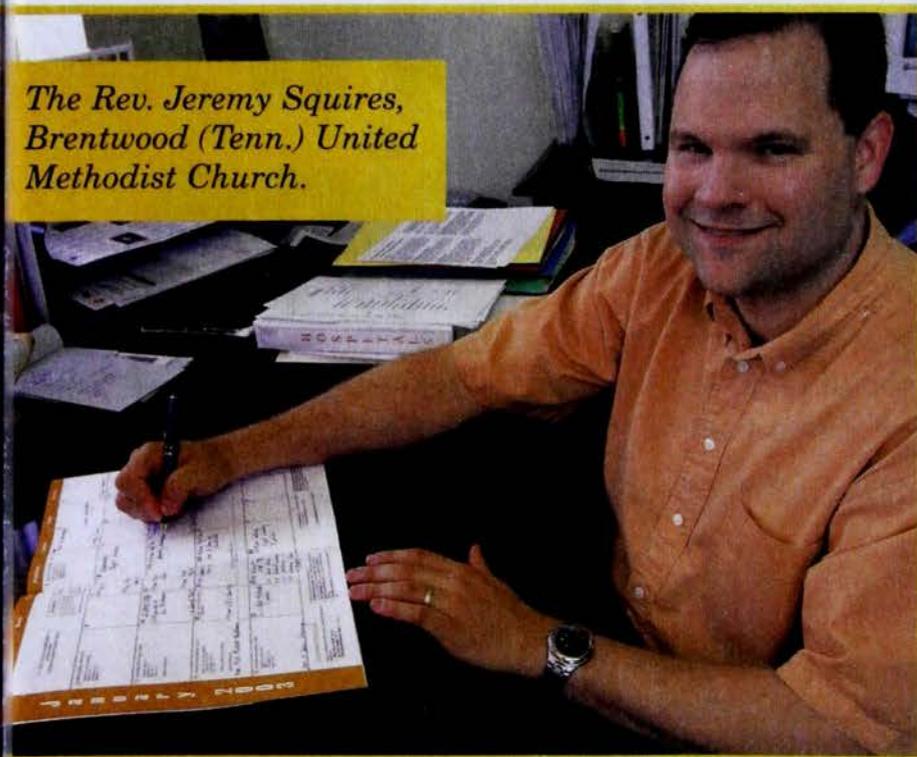
Circle that date!



Lindsey Hicks, 14, Nashville, Tenn.

The **2003 Official United Methodist Program Calendar** will help you to remember every important date: church meetings, birthdays, personal appointments, school events and sports activities. Generous 2-inch-square grids provide plenty of space to write key information.

The Rev. Jeremy Squires,
Brentwood (Tenn.) United
Methodist Church.



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