

Stop Risking Life on Earth

77 years after the atomic bombings of Hiroshima & Nagasaki

Ban the Bomb & Build for Peace

Wednesday, August 17, 2022, 6:00 pm

We gather to remember, to reflect
& to renew our commitment to peace & justice.

Tondabayashi Serenity Garden
Bethlehem

*These (nuclear) bombs were built as "weapons" for war,
but their significance greatly transcends war and all its causes and outcomes.
They grew out of history, yet they threaten to end history.
They were made by men, but they threaten to annihilate man.
They are a pit into which the whole world can fall -
a nemesis of all human intentions, actions and hopes.*

- Jonathan Schell, "The Fate of the Earth," 1982

Gathering with Drums

Monica McAgon, Bill Rosebrock & Friends

"Down By the Riverside"

Everyone led by LEPOCO Peace Singers ensemble

African-American Spiritual

Gonna lay down my sword and shield, down by the riverside, down by the riverside, down by the riverside;

Gonna lay down my sword and shield, down by the riverside, gonna study war no more.

I ain't gonna study war no more, ain't gonna study war no more, ain't gonna study war no more;

I iin't gonna study war no more, ain't gonna study war no more, ain't gonna study war no more.

Gonna teach peace around the world, down by the riverside, down by the riverside, down by the riverside;

Gonna teach peace around the world, down by the riverside, gonna study war no more.

I ain't gonna study war no more, ain't gonna study war no more, ain't gonna study war no more;

I iin't gonna study war no more, ain't gonna study war no more, ain't gonna study war no more.

Welcome

Susie Ravitz

"Beginners"

Reader: Kathryn Hoffman

Poem by Denise Levertov (1923-1997)

The poem was dedicated to the memory of Karen Silkwood & Eliot Gralla.

We Remember

Readers: **Nancy Johnston & Bill Thomas**

The words of **Setsuko Thurlow**, a Japanese-Canadian nuclear disarmament campaigner and Hibakusha, and a leader in the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons.

The words of **Mary Dickson**, a nuclear testing downwinder from the United States.

“Furusato”

Everyone led by LEPOCO Peace Singers ensemble

Written by Ishigi Asada. Translation by Ewan MacColl
Written in the years following WW II, this song spread throughout Japan.

In the place where our city was destroyed,
Where we buried the ashes of the ones that we love.
There the green grass grows and the white waving flowers.
Deadly harvest of two atom bombs.
Then brothers and sisters you must watch and take care,
That third atom bomb never comes.

Deadly rain gathers poison from the sky
And the fish carry death in the depths of the sea
Fishing boats are idle, their owners are blind
Deadly harvest of two atom bombs
So people of the world we must watch and take care,
That third atom bomb never comes.

Why We Need to Stop Risking Life on Earth

Readers: **Tom Pietrzak & Amy Frey & Bill Thomas**

Words from the **Vienna Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons**.

Late June 2022

The words of **Ira Helfand on the closeness of nuclear war**.

Ira Helfand, of the international steering group of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), is a former president of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, and past president of Physicians for Social Responsibility. He was interviewed on Democracy Now on August 4th.

Beyond Nuclear & Greenpeace on the dangers of war at **Zaporizhzhia power station** in southeastern Ukraine, from a report on CommonDreams, on August 8, “Ukraine Plant Under Fire.”

The words of **Ira Helfand** on nuclear destruction is not inevitable.

The words of **Ira Helfand** on making the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) work.

The words of **Ira Helfand** on what Biden, Xi, and Putin need to do.

Our Postcard to President Biden for August 2022

Introduced by **Monica McAghon & Susie Ravitz**

Please join the signing of a postcard to President Biden urging support for the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, for the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, for a U.S. policy of no first use of nuclear weapons, and for the elimination of nuclear weapons by 2045.

(The chorus will lead us in singing while the postcards circulate to sign.)

“If the War Goes On”

Everyone led by LEPOCO Peace Singers ensemble

“The Road to Basrah”

Text: John L. Bell & Graham Maule, 1997, revised 2002 Music: John L. Bell 1997

If the war goes on and the children die of hunger, and the old men weep, for the young men are no more,
And the women learn how to dance without a partner, who will keep the score?

If the war goes on and the truth is taken hostage, and new terrors lead to the need to euphemize;
When the calls for peace are declared unpatriotic, who'll expose the lies?

If the war goes on and the daily bread is terror, and the voiceless poor take the road as refugees;
When a nation's pride destines millions to be homeless, who will heed their pleas?

If the war goes on and the rich increase their fortunes, and the arms sales soar as new weapons are displayed;
When a fertile field turns to no-man's-land tomorrow, who'll approve such trade?

If the war goes on, will we close the doors to heaven?

If the war goes on, will we breach the gates of hell?

If the war goes on, will we ever be forgiven?

If the war goes on...

“Just My Hands”

Verses sung by Marcie Lightwood & Rick Weaver

Choruses sung by Everyone

Lyrics by Alex Comfort & Staughton Lynd (with new verses added regularly); Music by Pete Seeger (1961)

Rick & Marcie:

Just my strength can't ban the atom bomb,
Just your strength can't ban the atom bomb.

Everyone:

But if two and two and fifty make a million,
We'll see that day come round.

Rick & Marcie:

Just my truth can't drown out all the lies,
Just your truth can't drown out all the lies.

Everyone:

But if two and two and fifty make a million,
We'll see that day come round.

Rick & Marcie:

Just my words can't calm the tide of fear,
Just your words can't calm the tide of fear.

Everyone:

But if two and two and fifty make a million,
We'll see that day come round.

Rick & Marcie:

Just one heart can't turn this world to love,
Just your heart can't turn this world to love.

Everyone:

But if two and two and fifty make a million,
We'll see that day come round.

Rick & Marcie:

Just my hope can't build a bridge to peace,
Just your hope can't build a bridge to peace,

Everyone:

But if two and two and fifty make a million,
We'll see that day come round.

Mayors for Peace

Introduction: **Monica McAghon & Mimi Lang**

Remarks by **Mayor William Reynolds, Bethlehem**

Responsive Reading: Who Are the Ethical Giants?

Readers: **Monica McAghon & Pam Brubaker**

Reader #1: This August marks the 77th year since the United States dropped atomic bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. 170,000 women, men, and children were annihilated instantly and tens of thousands more were sentenced to eventual death from radiation poisoning and injuries.

Reader #2: American military leaders strongly dissented from the decision to use the bombs, some before August 1945, some in retrospect, for military and moral reasons. On Armistice Day 1948, Army General Omar Bradley captured the soulless militarism ruling the US government. He said, “Ours is a world of nuclear giants and ethical infants. We know more about war than we know about peace, more about killing than we know about living.”

Reader #1 & #2: Who are the “ethical infants,” the “we” who “know more about war than...about peace, more about killing than about living?” Who are the ethical infants?

Everyone: Not the 122 Countries that voted in 2017 to approve the United Nations Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, despite heavy pressure by the nuclear nations not to do so. By August 2022, 66 countries have ratified the Treaty. Many more are in the process of doing so. This is a marathon for disarmament to outpace the insane nuclear arms race in which all nine nuclear-armed countries are upgrading their weapons.

Reader #1 & 2: Who are the ethical infants?

Everyone: Not the US Conference of Mayors, an influential group, representing 1,400 US cities. In August 2021 they unanimously adopted a resolution calling on Washington to embrace the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

Reader #1 & 2: Who are the ethical infants?

Everyone: Not the Majority of the American Public. According to the 2020 Chicago Council Survey, the majority believe no country should be allowed to have nuclear weapons -- 54% of Republicans, 78% of Democrats, and 64% of Independents.

Reader #1 & 2: Who are the ethical infants?

Everyone: Not Climate Scientists. They recently committed civil disobedience, warning that we have only a few years to stabilize emissions and then reduce them in order to avoid climate catastrophe.

Reader #1 & 2: Who are the ethical infants?

Everyone: Not Veterans for Peace. They hold differing opinions about the roots of the war in Ukraine and the relative culpability of Russia, the US, and NATO. They are unanimous in calling for ending the conflict as soon as possible. They say, “War is not the answer – it is mass murder and mayhem. Nobody wins in war but the war profiteers.”

Reader #1 & 2: Who are the ethical infants?

Everyone: Not the World Food Program. Their director, David Beaseley rages against the food crisis affecting hundreds of millions in Asia and Africa -- a result of Covid, the climate crisis, and the lack of grain and cooking oil from Ukraine and Russia. He said, “The best thing we can do right now is end the damn war in Russia and Ukraine and get the port open in Odesa.”

Reader #1 & 2: Who are the ethical infants?

Everyone: Not the Bees.

Reader #1:

*The bees
Do not stop
Collecting pollen
When humans
Murder each other
With guns.*

Reader #2:

*The bees think:
How strange,
How low
On the evolutionary scale
Must those humans be,
That they haven't yet
Figured out
How to make honey
Or peace.*

Reader #1 & 2: Who are the ethical infants?

Everyone: Not the Trees. Trees communicate, share nutrients and water. They act to protect each other from pests and other threats by releasing repelling chemicals. Trees that connect in forests by underground networks of fungi live longer lives than isolated trees.

Everyone: Who, then, are the “ethical infants” who “know more about war than about peace, more about killing than about living?” Who are the ethical infants?

Reader #1: The Masculinized, Militarized Nuclear Nations. Among them, Russia for its resort to war against Ukraine, and the US and NATO in their determination to bring Russia down by feeding the scourge of war with billions of dollars worth of weapons to Ukraine.

Everyone: Who are the ethical infants?

Reader #2: The Weapons Industry. Public Citizen released a report estimating that military contractors’ contributions to US Congressional members in 2022 “could see a nearly 450,000% return on their investment.”

Everyone: We know the upgrading of nuclear weapons by nine countries and the morbid fantasy of a military solution to the Russian-Ukraine conflict risk life on Earth. Only determined diplomacy, only ethical giants can save life on earth.

The Responsive Reading is based on an essay by Patricia Hynes of the Traprock Center for Peace & Justice in Massachusetts, published at commondreams.org and portside.org. The poem, “Bees,” is by Alde Solovy.

A Moment for Quiet Reflection

The Hope of Living Now as We Think Human Beings Should Live

Readers: **Lynn Van Dyke & Rick Dow & Renate Brosky**

We will hear words from or about:

Howard Zinn / UN Secretary-General António Guterres /

Veterans for Peace / Gustavo Petro / Vincent Intondi

Interfaith Statement from 175 organizations / Senators who introduced a War Power Resolution about Yemen

National Council of Elders / Leslie Cagan / An international agreement on grain shipments

A Russian citizen / Ukrainian Pacifist Movement / Debbie Orben & Mimi Lang

Excerpt from **“Look Out”**

Reader: **Mary Louise Bross**

Poem by Wendell Berry

Wendell Berry is a writer and a farmer in Port Royal, Kentucky.

The poem was published in “The Progressive” in June 2005.

“Dona Nobis Pacem”

Everyone led by LEPOCO Peace Singers ensemble

(Translation: Give Us Peace)

Traditional

Dona nobis pacem, pacem. Dona nobis pacem.

Dona nobis pacem. Dona nobis pacem.

Dona nobis pacem. Dona nobis pacem

This program was planned by the **Stop the Wars Committee** of LEPOCO.

Members of the Committee involved in the planning of this program:

Monica McAghon, Mimi Lang, Susie Ravitz, Nancy Tate, Janet Ney, Pam Brubaker.

A donation basket is available on the literature table. Donations will cover postage for the announcement postcards, and postcards to President Biden, and the very high fee to the city for the use of the Tondabayashi Serenity Garden.

Peace Singers: Jeff Vitelli, Marcie Lightwood, Nancy Johnston, Nancy Tate, Rick Weaver, Chris Klump, Martha Christine.

Thank you to Tom Stinnett, Margot Hillman, Pam Brubaker, Nancy Tate, and others for logistical support for the program.

The LEPOCO Peace Center is located at 1705 West Broad St., Bethlehem (18018).

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