



Interfaith Council for Peace & Justice

730 Tappan, Ann Arbor, MI 48104 ~ (734) 663-1870 ~ www.icpj.net ~ info@icpj.net

Newsletter

August-September 2008

A Victory for Human Rights!

By Jennifer Mills

This passed spring Congress voted in favor of the latest bill supporting the SOA Watch (220 to 189). This is exciting news for LATF and a step toward transparency with the SOA/WHINSEC, a military training institute accused of training human rights abusers.

The bill will force the Pentagon to release the names of the graduates from the School of the Americas and WHINSEC, as well as the year they attended and their military rank at the time. This information will be helpful in finding more links between SOA graduates and human rights abuses in Latin America.

On a local note, representative John Dingell voted in our favor for the first time. Learn more about the vote at www.soaw.org.

ICPJ's Latin America Task Force is planning an eventful fall. Some of the dates and locations have not been set, but that information will be sent out soon.

- **Fr. Roy Bourgeois** will be speaking in Ann Arbor on Tuesday, September 9 at 7:30 (location to be announced). Fr. Roy is a Maryknoll priest, and the founder of SOA Watch. He is committed to nonviolent action, and it's apparent in the peaceful demonstration at the annual rally and vigil outside the gates of the school.
- During the month of October **Patricia Isasa** will be speaking in Ann Arbor. Patricia is an Argentine woman who was disappeared when she was 16, released, and then disappeared again a few years later. Thousands of Argentines were kidnapped during the Dirty War, and until recently the perpetrators have lived in impunity. Patricia has since brought charges against 7 people involved, and they stand trial this summer.
- **Get on the bus!** November 21-23 is the SOA Watch's rally and vigil outside the gates of Ft. Benning. For the past two years ICPJ has chartered a bus to this event, and they have been great successes. Over 20,000 people gather peacefully at the gates to protest the school, and commemorate those that have been lost at the hands of its graduates. For more information, or to sign up please contact Jennifer Mills: jjanness@gmail.com, (248) 909-5366 or Ken Srdjak: akeneka@gmail.com. ☺



Ken Srdjak holds a grave marker for Martir Diaz, age 14, killed by graduates of the School of the Americas (photo: A. Everts)

CROP Hunger Walk 2008 Local Grant Recipients Selected

By Grace Kotre

CROP Hunger Walk 2008 is rapidly approaching and the CROP Hunger Walk Organizing Committee has been hard at work planning for the big day! The committee recently went through the difficult process of selecting local hunger-relief agencies to receive portions of this year's CROP funds. With times in Michigan as difficult as they are, it was no surprise that the committee received applications from more agencies than it could adequately fund. The local climate reflects the urgent need for hunger-relief programs like CROP Hunger

Walk. This year's local grant recipients are:

- Community Action Network
- The Breakfast at St. Andrew's
- Peace Neighborhood Center
- Hope Clinic
- Aid in Milan
- Motor Meals of Ann Arbor
- Emmanuel House
- Northfield Human Services Food Pantry
- S.O.S. Emergency Food Program

CROP Walk 2008 will take place at First United Methodist Church in Ann Arbor on Sunday, October 12th.

Registration begins at 1:15pm; walk begins at 2:15pm. Please mark your calendar! ☺

You make a difference!

"Today the mail came, and I have to tell you that I held my breath when I opened it. I was SO happy to see CAN is receiving ... CROP Walk proceeds this year! THANK YOU!!!! Not serving food is just not an option, but with everything getting more expensive and funding going downwards, -- it gets harder and harder...."
--Joan Doughty from Community Action Network

Scriptural Reasoning Unites Muslims, Jews, & Christians in Interfaith Dialogue

By Grace Kotre

When the Common Ground for Peace in Israel/Palestine Working Group planned its first "Scriptural Reasoning" event in June, we didn't know if people would be interested. We were delighted then, when over 60 Muslims, Jews, Christians, and others showed up to share a meal and to explore one another's sacred texts.

The event began with initial remarks on the topic of: "How our faith traditions teach us to treat 'the other, the neighbor, the stranger'" from Imam Dawud Walid, the Executive Director of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR-MI), Aura Ahuvia, Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Havurah & Rabbinic Student, and Rev. James Rhodenhiser, Rector at St. Clare's Episcopal Church.

Next, participants gathered around dinner tables and shared their perspectives, interpretations of their own sacred texts, and their reactions to the three speakers. This is where participants had a real chance to engage with people from different traditions.

Scriptural Reasoning is a practice rooted in dialogue; it

attempts to create a safe space for mutual sharing in order to foster the development of mutual respect within interfaith groups. We cannot have strong interfaith collaboration around social issues unless we have interfaith dialogue about spiritual issues. This first attempt at Scriptural Reasoning in our community took us a step closer to that goal.

In response to this excitement and the high demand for more unifying events like Scriptural Reasoning, The Common Ground for Peace in Israel/Palestine Working Group is already planning the next event! Scriptural Reasoning II, which will relate to "**the value of life in this world compared to the value of the 'world to come'**," will take place at Temple Beth Emeth/St. Clare's Episcopal Church (2309 Packard St.) on August 28th starting at 6:30pm. Dinner will again be provided. Speakers for this event will include Heather Laird on Muslim scripture, Rabbi Robert Dobrusin on Jewish scripture, and Rev. Paul Duke on Christian Scripture. All are welcome! Please join us! For details please visit www.icpj.net or call (734) 663-1870.

Where should ICPJ be in 5 years?

We're working on having a strategic planning retreat in September, and we want to know where you, our members, would like to see us go. Please share a brief, 75-word or less, summary of where you would like to see ICPJ in five years. You can offer your vision online at: <http://www.icpj.net/2008/06/26/icpj-in-5-years/> or you can email info@icpj.net, or drop it in the mail.

If you'd like to be part of this retreat, please contact Chuck at chuck@icpj.net or 734-663-1870.¶

I support ICPJ!

I am enclosing a check for _____ to support Interfaith Council for Peace and Justice.

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City _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Make checks payable to "ICPJ" and mail to ICPJ, 730 Tappan, Ann Arbor, MI 48104, or donate online at www.icpj.net/donate

About ICPJ

The Interfaith Council for Peace and Justice strives to create a setting where people of diverse faiths and backgrounds can come together to explore issues of faith, peace, and justice; to respectfully address differences; and to find common ground for action to create a better world.

Task forces and volunteers carry out this work, with support from staff and guidance from a steering committee. Currently the working program groups are:

- Disarmament Working Group
- Hunger Task Force
- Latin America Task Force
- Racial and Economic Justice
- Iraq Working Group
- Common Ground for Peace in Israel/Palestine
- Global Warming Working Group

Anyone who supports our mission is welcome to join our work. Membership dues are \$25 (\$10 student/low income) per voting member. Memberships must be paid one week prior to a membership meeting to be eligible to vote.¶



Remembering Art Bublitz.

Art Bublitz, a former member of our former member of ICPJ's Steering Committee, and a supporter of nuclear disarmament and peace in the Middle East died on May 21, 2008. Even as he became physically frail, he continued to serve the cause of peace. He was a dedicated proponent of justice, and he will be missed.¶

Area Congregations Post Anti-Torture Banners

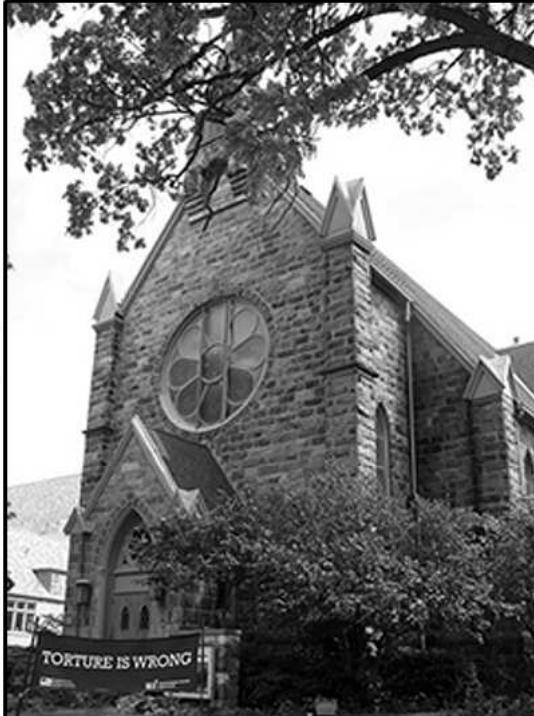
The ICPJ Iraq Next Steps Committee, with the National Religious Campaign Against Torture (NRCAT), has asked congregations of all sizes, and all faiths, to join in a public witness against torture by displaying a banner outside their place of worship during Torture Awareness Month June 2008. The campaign has seen success throughout the community with 12 participants helping to spread the message that torture is morally wrong and must be addressed.



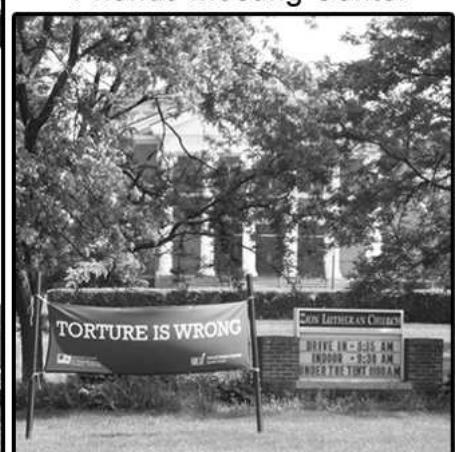
Friends Meeting Center



Lord Of Light



First Baptist-Ann Arbor



Zion Lutheran Church



Canterbury House



Northside Community Church



Northside Presbyterian/St Aidans



Zen Buddhist Temple



West Side United Methodist

Thank you to all of the participating congregations

Also involved are St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, Memorial Christian, the Adrian Dominican Sisters, St. Joseph Catholic Church South Lyon, and Curch of the Good Shepherd



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“Only Love Dispels Hate.”

--The Buddha

After the Zen Buddhist Temple's "torture is wrong" banner was stolen (p. 3), they put up another banner and added this quote to the banner to explain their opposition to torture.

Upcoming ICPJ Events

See www.icpj.net/events-calendar for a listing of community wide peace and justice events.

Tuesday, August 26--Dinner and a Movie "The Original Child Bomb". Inspired by Thomas Merton's poem, ORIGINAL CHILD BOMB shows the human cost of nuclear weapons. The bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki are depicted through declassified footage, photographs, drawings and testimonies of mothers, brothers and soldiers. Ordinary people gaze upon the nuclear past and its terrifying present. They expose the political rhetoric surrounding "security" and "weapons of mass destruction". The film is a wake-up call and an invitation to action. FREE and open to the public. All are welcome to RSVP and bring a dish to pass, but this is not required. Dinner will begin at 6:30PM, and the movie will be at 7PM. Located at Memorial Christian Church, 730 Tappan, Ann Arbor. Questions? Want to RSVP? Contact Jaimie Philip at 734.663.1870 or jaimie@umich.edu

Thursday, August 28th - Scriptural Reasoning II -ICPJ's Common Ground for Peace in Israel/Palestine Working Group hosts a 2nd evening of Scriptural Reasoning: an opportunity to explore sacred texts of the three Abrahamic

faiths in a safe and thought-provoking environment. The topic will be related to "the value of life in this world compared to the value of the 'world to come'." Location: Temple Beth Emeth/St. Clare's Social Hall. Dinner will begin at 6:30 and program will begin at 7pm. Speakers (Heather Laird, on Muslim scripture, Rabbi Robert Dobrusin, on Jewish scripture, and Rev. Paul Duke, on Christian scripture) will introduce texts from their respective religious traditions relating to the topic. Small group dialogue will follow. *More information will be posted shortly.* Please contact gracek@icpj.net or call (734) 663-1870 with questions.

Tuesday, September 9--Talk by Fr. Roy Bourgeois, founder of SOA Watch. 7:30 p.m. Location to be determined. Details: 734-663-1870, chuck@icpj.net.

Sunday, September 21--Peace Action of Michigan's 7th Annual PeaceBuilder Celebration, recognizing Interfaith Council for Peace and Justice. Details to come.