

Peaceways

CENTRAL KENTUCKY COUNCIL FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE July 2015

An Open Letter to White America

by Reva Russell English

Like many, I have just learned the most recent, heinous news: nine dead at a Wednesday night service at an AME church in racially embattled Charleston, South Carolina. That some see these murders as a hate crime and proof of the terror black people are routinely subjected to in our culture is no surprise. That some see these murders as little more than the work of a single bad apple, a glitch in the system, is no surprise either. That those differences in perspective fall along clear lines—one black and one white—is also unsurprising. Nevertheless, it is something that has to change.

Since the release of the video of the Walter Scott shooting—and it's worth always remembering that it's the video, not the shooting, that made his death news in the wider culture—the black community in the Charleston area has been wearing T-shirts that ask in all caps, "Do you believe us now?" A question that seems to be a

direct nod to the violence black people suffer at the hands of law enforcement and other institutions of white power that, until cell phones had video cameras, was routinely perpetrated, ignored and written off.

Following last night's act of terror, it's worth asking anew, "Well, do we?"

White America, we have a problem. From our cops to our homeowners to our parking lot vigilantes, we pull guns on and shoot unarmed black people at a rate that—if it were perpetrated against any distinctive group of white people to this degree, be they Baptists, truck drivers, or small business owners—would be cause for deployment of the National Guard to ensure the protection of every member of that group lest innocent blood continue to be shed.

Instead, we rationalize and explain away: He shouldn't have run. He shouldn't have jaywalked. She shouldn't

have banged on his door after dark. He shouldn't have been selling cigarettes. He should have turned his music down. He shouldn't have worn a hoodie. He shouldn't have been playing with a toy gun.

What of the murders at the Emanuel AME Church in Charleston? Who among

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••••• **Black in America**

by Penny Christian

Being "Black in America" is not a cliché, folks. It is not a rallying cry for the African American diaspora. When we say "Black in America," it is an all encompassing description of a reality no one else can understand. It is a constant. We can never turn it off. It is our reality. It permeates our workplace, our shopping experiences, our education opportunities.

As an African American woman, my mere presence in an elevator causes your heart rate to increase. You fear me because of your perceptions and prejudices; I fear you because you want me DEAD.

Sometimes we are told we bring these things on ourselves. Trayvon Martin would still be alive if he had stayed in his 'hood. You honestly believe that. The feeling I have in the pit of my stomach whenever my husband leaves the house, it's real because he may happen upon a member of law enforcement who is having a bad day. Please do not tell me how far we have come; right now, being black in America is tantamount to a death sentence.

I ask readers of *Peaceways* to pray that our generation will be the one that breaks the cycle of violence and mistrust between races.

Penny Christian, a member of the Peaceways newsletter committee, is a mother and wife. Black in America first appeared on her Facebook page.

An easy way to support CKCPJ

If you shop at Kroger and have linked the number on your Kroger Plus card so that Kroger makes a donation to CKCPJ for purchases you make at their store, THANK YOU! CKCPJ has discovered that this is a very easy way for members and supporters to financially support the organization.

We don't need much, but we do need a little bit to make sure that we are able to both keep the organization solvent and to underwrite the requests that we receive from peace and justice groups in central Kentucky.

If you are currently enrolled in the Kroger Community Rewards program, you will be required to re-enroll annually through the Kroger.com website. Re-enrollment for 2015-16 will take place from Aug. 1 to Aug. 31, with the new year beginning on Sept. 1, 2015. Make a note on your calendar for Aug. 1 to re-enroll in the Kroger Community Rewards program. Or if you have not enrolled, take this easy opportunity to provide financial support each year.

On Aug. 1 you can start by going to Kroger.com; have your Kroger Plus card handy so you can enter your card number on the registration site; CKCPJ's number is 16439.

If you have not yet taken the opportunity to support CKCPJ in this way, now would be a great time to register. Thanks!

Got Privilege?

By Justin Mog, Reprinted with permission from FORsooth

There was just so much love in the house when the 16th annual White Privilege Conference rolled through Louisville March 11-14. I certainly felt very privileged to be in communion with such a large (over 1500 attendees) and diverse gathering of loving folks who were passionate about healing the wounds that privilege and oppression in its many forms have carved so deeply into our culture, psyche, and society in the U.S.

Look, it ain't about whether you "have plenty of black friends," or whether you think "I see people, not colors;" or whether you voted for the black man in the White House. In fact, it ain't about YOU, at all. It's about US, and what we've become as a society. The facts are simply undeniable. For a reality check, read Michelle Alexander's *The New Jim Crow* or the works of John A. Powell. Or simply watch the evening news with your eyes wide open. From 'stop and frisk' policing to health disparities to housing segregation to the school-to-prison pipeline... it all points squarely in the direction of a lingering, insidious culture of racism and stubborn systems of oppression working to maintain privilege.

America has a deep-seated problem with race. We don't want to talk about it or confront it, but it manifests itself in all kinds of horrific ways that tear apart the fabric of society and prevent us from coming together to build the bright future we all want. As someone who struggles every day against the many forces which make our culture one of the most unsustainable the Earth has ever seen, the White Privilege Conference helped bring to the forefront of my consciousness the need to dismantle these lingering systems of oppression if we are to have any hope of constructing a new society that is grounded in sustainability. We simply have no planetary future without each other.

We have to start doing the work of being able to see race again. This time, not for the purpose of dividing us, but in order to bring us together. Race (and other important differences such as gender, sexual orientation, physical ability, ethnicity, nationality, and religion) has long been a tool used by those in positions of power and privilege to divide us and keep us from uniting in the struggle for collec-

tive liberation. It is time for us to grab the sharp end of that sword and use it as a weapon against this deadly scourge. Yes, it will hurt and it will be uncomfortable, but how can I feel comfort while billions of people suffer simply because they happen to be different from me?

As a white, heterosexual, able-bodied male born into a well-educated, middle class, Christian family in the U.S., I am most certainly at the very zenith of privilege. What's most disturbing about that is how easy it would be for someone in my position to simply ignore the issues of race and privilege and to happily go about my life trying to do good in the world, all the while imagining that race (or any other dividing line) has nothing to do with it. In fact, there's no clearer evidence of my privilege than the fact that I can choose to ignore these differences while everyone else must struggle with their implications every day. All it takes is a modicum of empathy and compassion to see that, yeah, race does matter.

But there are bright rays of hope bursting forth all over the place, and the White Privilege Conference is but one opportunity to gather those rays together into a shining rainbow of positive energy. Next year's conference will be in Philadelphia so make your plans now: [\[conference.com\]\(http://conference.com\). In the meantime, support the ever-growing Black Lives Matter movement and get involved with local organizations like Louisville's Showing Up for Racial Justice \(\[showingupforracialjustice.org\]\(http://showingupforracialjustice.org\)\) or the Kentucky Alliance Against Racist and Political Oppression \(\[facebook.com/kyalliance/\]\(http://facebook.com/kyalliance/\)\). Or form a white allies group in your workplace, school, neighborhood, or faith community.](http://whiteprivilege-</p></div><div data-bbox=)

For far too long, many of us white folks have been all too eager to stand and be counted, but then sit down quickly so as not to rock the boat. It is high time for us to move beyond our so-called "colorblindness" and the lip-service of well-intentioned solidarity. Now is the time for us to do the work of confronting and challenging privilege in its many modern manifestations and to systematically dismantle the institutions of white supremacy. We must do this not only out of love for our brothers and sisters of color, but out of respect for ourselves. My dignity is not lessened by your dignity. In fact, each is strengthened by the other.

Justin Mog, Ph.D., is the Assistant to the Provost for Sustainability Initiatives at the University of Louisville. He first noticed the full extent of his white privilege while living abroad as a Fulbright Scholar in the southern Philippines in 2001 and as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Paraguay 2005-08. Contact: justin.mog@louisville.edu

Lexington United, a peace education initiative



Passing a bucket with only your feet takes concentration and teamwork. Add a ball to the bucket and it takes EXTRA concentration and teamwork. In June, Lexington United taught such games to training participants.

Michelle Tooley dies, May 26

by Betty Hibler

On May 26, 2015, central Kentucky lost a remarkable peacemaker when Jacquelyn Michelle Tooley died at her home in Berea, Ky., at the age of 62. Michelle was surrounded by friends who sang and

Studies Program, her courses incorporated service-learning and collaborations with social change organizations, and exposure to global resources and networks.

Her scholarly efforts, such as her book, *Voices of the Voiceless: Women, Justice, and Human Rights in Guatemala*, focused on Christian ethics and the intersections of belief and social action, particularly through the experiences of marginalized people.

Michelle led study-abroad classes to Central America and Africa, served on the admissions committee for international applicants to Berea College, and led student delegations to the Model African Union in Washington, D.C. On campus and in the community, her kindness, exuberant personality and warm smile lifted all spirits.

She engaged comfortably with people from all backgrounds, ages, and nationalities. She encouraged her students to explore the connectedness of local actions and global issues, she affirmed their talents, and she empowered them towards leadership and advocacy roles they may never have imagined. She welcomed students of all nationalities into her home and her family, maintaining mentoring and nurturing relationships well beyond their graduations. Many students consider her a second mother. In response, she was blessed with a network of students across the world who wanted to stay in touch. In 2014, Michelle attended the wedding in Africa of a former student and prospective foreign minister of his country.

Michelle was an avid traveler and hiker and a favorite aunt to many children. She is survived by three brothers and a sister and their families. An ecumenical spirit, Michelle was an active member of her home faith community at Union Church in Berea. She requests that memorial gifts be made to Bread for the World, Witness for Peace, Jeff Street Baptist Community at Liberty in Louisville, or the Mission and Service Board of Union Church, Berea.



Michelle Tooley

prayed her home. When able to gather her strength during her two-year struggle with melanoma, Michelle poured it into her continued passion for peace and social justice. Moved by a profound faith, Michelle was an inspirational teacher of both subjects at Berea College and an activist who lived what she taught.

Born in Lufkin, Tex., in January 1953, Michelle earned a bachelor's degree in Spanish and English education from Northwestern State University of Louisiana (1975), a Master's of Divinity from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary (1982), and a doctorate in Christian social ethics from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary (1995). Always extending her horizons, Michelle also studied at the cutting-edge programs of Notre Dame's Kroc Institute for Peace Studies and at the Center for Justice and Peacebuilding at Eastern Mennonite University. She taught in the Religion Department at Belmont University in Nashville (1995 to 2003) and at Berea College in Berea (2003 to 2015). At Berea, where she served as Eli Lilly Chair of Religion and Chair of the Peace and Social Justice

The Central Kentucky Council for Peace and Justice

Board of Directors: Rebecca Ballard DiLoreto, David Christiansen (co-chair), Bilal El-Amin, Mary Ann Ghosal (secretary), Marion Gibson, Heather Hadi, Randolph Hollingsworth, Rahul Karanth, Steven Lee Katz (treasurer), Susan Lamb, Richard Mitchell, Bruce Mundy, Kerby Neill, Steve Pavey, Nadia Rasheed, Alexandria Sehon, Rabbi Uri Smith, Teddi Smith-Robillard, Janet Tucker (co-chair), Craig Wilkie. *Peaceways Staff:* Margaret Gabriel (editor), Penny Christian, Gail Koehler, Betsy Neale, Jim Trammel (proof-readers). The views expressed in *Peaceways* are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of CKCPJ. *Administrative Manager:* Brandy Davis

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Calendar for Peace & Justice

The council seeks to promote dialogue as a path to peace and justice. Consequently, we announce events that we do not necessarily endorse.

Thurs., Jul. 2

“Shadows of Liberty” 7:00-8:30 pm, Great Hall of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Lexington, 3564 Clay's Mill Rd. David Miller will show the film; an extraordinary truth behind the news media that includes censorship, cover-up, and corporate control.

Filmmaker Jean-Phillipe Tremblay takes an intrepid journey through the dark corridors of the American media landscape, where global conglomerates call the shots. Renowned journalists, activists, and academics give insider accounts of a broken media system.

Wed., Jul. 8

CKCJ Social Justice Committee

7-8:30 pm, Quaker Meeting House, 649 Price Ave., Lexington. Discussion topics will include immigration, gentrification and on-going involvement with Stop the Violence Lexington.

Thurs.-Sun., Jul. 9-12

The Whippoorwill Festival, Skills for Earth-Friendly Living, HomeGrown HideAways near Berea, Ky. The four-day outdoor festival includes workshops on primitive and old-time Appalachian living skills, backyard gardening, yoga, herbal remedies, fermentation, dutch oven cooking over the fire, making cheese, raising backyard chickens. Kids attend free and events are family friendly with speakers, live music and dancing. The cost is low, tent camping, dinner and breakfast provided. For more information contact Dave Cooper, davecooper928@yahoo.com or see www.whippoorwillfest.com.

Sat. July 11

Peace Walk, sponsored by Lexington's Violence Intervention Project. Registration, 6 pm., Duncan Park. The walk will proceed through the East End of Lexington with police, churches, community groups and residents. People from all over Lexington are invited to participate by walking or turning on porch lights at the time of the march. For more information or to set up a resource table, contact Anita Franklin, 859-433-4832 or nitazeta50@gmail.com.

Tues., Jul. 14

PFLAG Central Kentucky 7:30-8:30 pm, St Michael's Episcopal Church 2025 Bellefonte, Lexington. The meeting will feature a gay couple who have been together for over 40 years, discussing the changes they have seen and how the changes have impacted their lives. They anticipate the Supreme Court ruling and what it means for them and others in our community. Support group discussion will follow. PFLAG welcomes LGBTQs, friends, families and allies.

Wed., Jul. 15

CKCJ Peace Action Committee

7-8:30 pm, Quaker Meeting House, 649 Price Ave., Lexington. Discussion topics will include planning for the observation of the 70th anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki on Aug. 9. For more information, contact Richard Mitchell, rjm47@twc.com.

Sat. July 18

Stop the Violence Lexington Peace March: Uniting the Community At noon, groups will march from north, south east and west Lexington, meeting downtown at the courthouse for a rally at 1 pm. Sponsored by Stop the Violence Lexington and the Kentucky Justice Coalition, the event is designed to unite the community in addressing systemic issues that create conditions prone to violence. Uniting the community through the march is the first step in addressing the issue of violence in Lexington. A town hall meeting addressing violence will follow the Peace Walk at a future date. For information about the times and dates of the town hall meeting, see kentuckyjusticeco.nationbuilder.com or the Stop the Violence Lexington Facebook page.

Tues., July 21

Lexington Working Families Campaign

7 pm, Quaker Meeting House, 649 Price Ave., Lexington. The meeting will focus on the on-going discussion of the proposed increase of the minimum wage in Lexington.

Thurs. Aug. 6

The Seventh Annual Humanist Forum Family Picnic, 6:30 pm, Unitarian Universalist Church of Lexington, 3564 Clay's Mill Rd. Bring something to share: Food, drink, preconceived notions, prejudices, curiosity, etc. SEE skeptical freethinkers, secular Humanists, Universal Unitarian Humanists, atheists, agnostics, et. al., in their natural habitat. Meet their families, learn of their professions, their hopes, their fears, their dreams. “Family” means kids and significant others included. Humanist Forum events welcome people of all beliefs.

Thurs. Aug. 6

Who Was Dayani Cristal? a film viewing sponsored by Kentuckians for the Commonwealth. 6:30 pm, Village Drive Library, 2185 Versailles Road.

Mon. Aug. 31

Mission Monday, Blue Stallion Brewing 610 W. 3rd Street, Lexington. 4 pm - 11 pm. CKCJ will receive ten percent of tap room sales. Blue Stallion holds "Mission Monday" during the summer months, donating ten percent of tap room sales to local non-profits. For more information about Mission Monday and Blue Stallion Brewing, see bluestallionbrewing.com

Sun. Sept. 20

9th Lexington Peace Fair, Lawn of Bluegrass Community and Technical College, 470 Cooper Drive, Lexington. 1 pm - 6 pm. For more information, contact Rebecca Glasscock, rebecca.glasscock@uky.edu.

Thurs. Nov. 12

ACLU of Kentucky 60th Anniversary Bill of Rights Celebration Dinner, The Olmsted, 3701 Frankfort Ave., Louisville.

Your Event Here

Do you have an event that you would like to promote in Peaceways? Send information to peacewayseditor@gmail.com. Please send notification by the 10th of the previous month.

Young Lives Matter

Let's Get Better and Do It Together

By Billie Mallory

In the spring of 2014, a young life was taken by a senseless act of gun violence. 21-year-old Antonio Franklin, Jr., was in the wrong place at the wrong time and mistaken for someone else. He was shot on the playground in Duncan Park by another youth. The shooting devastated the lives of those closest to these young men, but it also impacted the entire community.

Anita Franklin, Antonio's mother, has made a heroic effort to make a positive difference in the lives of other young people. She founded a CommUnity organization, the Violence Intervention Project. VIP has hosted events to advocate awareness and has focused activities to stop youth violence in the year that has followed.

There have been concerts, participation in parades and organized Peace Walks to raise awareness and mobilize churches, law enforcement, sororities/fraternities, and various community organizations to help find solutions to the issue of youth violence.

The first of this summer's Peace Walks was held at Duncan Park on June 20; additional walks are scheduled for July 11 and Aug. 8 at Duncan Park (corner of 5th Street and Martin Luther King Boulevard). The walks begin at 6 p.m. Participants are asked to register, and there will be resource information tables. After registration is complete, participants will walk through the East End in unity with police, churches, community groups and residents.

Everyone is urged to participate—by walking, by coming to the park or by turning on your porch lights during the time of the marches as a show of support. If your group would like to participate, contact Anita Franklin, 859-433-4832 or nitazeta50@gmail.com. For more information go to the Antonio Franklin, Jr. Facebook page.

"Our mission is to commit to our youth and focus on putting an end to youth violence. We are dedicated to finding solutions to help repair, rebuild and restore our CommUnity to make it a safer place to live and raise our children," Anita Franklin said.

Billie Mallory is a community activist.

MONTHLY MEETINGS

CKCPJ Board Meetings 3rd Monday, 7 pm. More info: 859-488-1448 or peaceandjusticeky@gmail.com. All are welcome!

Interfaith Prayer Vigil for Peace Every Thursday 5:30-6 pm at Triangle Park (corner of Broadway and Main St) in downtown Lexington. Contact Richard Mitchell 859-327-6277.

Kentucky Migrant Network 1st Monday Noon-1:30 pm, Cardinal Valley Center, 1306 Versailles Road, Lexington. Contact Isabel Gereda Taylor, 859-258-3824, itaylor@lexingtonky.gov, .

PFLAG Central Kentucky 2nd Tuesday 6:30-8:30 pm. LGBTQ individuals of all ages, family member, friends and allies are welcome. St. Michael's Episcopal Church, 2025 Bellefonte Dr., Lexington. info@pflagcentralky.org or 859-338-4393. Speakers followed by confidential support group meeting.

Bluegrass Fairness of Central Kentucky 2nd Tuesday 7:30 pm, Lexington Public Central Library, 140 E. Main St., Lexington. Contact Craig Cammack, Chair, 859-951-8565 or info@lexfair.org.

Wed Night GLSO discussion group 7 pm at the Pride Center, 389 Waller Ave, Lexington. GLSO operates Kentucky's only Pride Center, where they've been quietly providing services to the GLBTQQA community for decades. More info, hours Pride Center is open and other links at: <http://www.glsso.org>.

Humanist Forum of Central Kentucky First Thursday, 7 pm, Great Hall of the Unitarian Universalist Church, 3564 Clays Mill Rd, Lexington. The Forum is a Chapter of the American Humanist Association. Meetings are open to people of all beliefs willing to express their opinions in a civil manner. Childcare is provided. Contact President Staci Maney, staci@olliegee.com or 859-797-2662.

Kentuckians for the Commonwealth 3rd Thursday, 7 pm Episcopal Diocese Mission House at 4th St. and MLK Blvd, Lexington. Contact Ondine Quinn, 859-276-0563.

NAMI Lexington Support Groups Every Sunday 2:30-4 pm. Participation Station, 869 Sparta Court, Lexington. Call 859-272-7891 or go to www.namilex.org.

Christian-Muslim Dialogue Program 4th Saturday 10 am-noon. All are welcome. Locations vary, call 859-277-5126. The Christian-Muslim dialogue promotes understanding and mutual respect between Christians and Muslims. Exploring moral, cultural and political factors shaping the current context promotes personal and collective responsibility to build a more just and peaceful world.

Movies with Spirit 2nd Friday of every month. Unitarian Universalist Church, 3564 Clay's Mill Road, Lexington. Potluck at 6 pm, film at 7.

National Action Network 3rd Thursday of each month, 7 pm to 8:30 pm at the Central Library, Lexington.

Want your group's meeting listed here?

Contact peacewayseditor@gmail.com or call 859-488-1448.

When charity hurts its recipients

Toxic Charity: How Churches and Charities Hurt Those They Help, And How to Reverse It. Robert D. Lupton (2011), HarperOne Publishers. 208 pages.

Reviewed by Jim Trammel

A church mission trip of “vacationaries” (vacationing missionaries enjoying “religious tourism”) is a strikingly inefficient way to help. It makes participants feel good, but the \$30,000 required to fly a team to Honduras, Haiti, Cuba, Africa, wherever, could do more if sensitively donated and locally invested.

Robert D. Lupton in *Toxic Charity* tells of volunteer amateur tilers making a mess of a mission re-tiling job while skilled local tilers go unemployed. It’s ludicrous that a church in Mexico was painted six times in one summer by six separate well-meaning teams.

On a larger scale, a trillion dollars have poured into Africa over the past 50 years, and country by country, the continent has never been worse off. Life expectancy, per capita income, adult literacy – all are plummeting, and populations are turned into indigents and beggars.

A benefactor gets a certain sinking feeling when handing out sustenance

to those with needs. Lupton has been in social service 40 years, and knows that when you give once, you inspire appreciation; twice, anticipation; three times, expectation; four times, entitlement; and five times, dependency.

Charitable giving causes resentment in recipients and, repeated, takes away initiative. Rescue giving in emergencies is briefly justified, but Hurricane Katrina struck in 2005 and free food and clothing was still being distributed to “victims” six years later. Lupton argues that rescue efforts must shift from giveaways toward community development, a much harder process than handing out freebies.

The keys to project success: Focus on one neighborhood at a time; include leaders who live there; and, in all steps, remember the recipients must be allowed to hold on to dignity by participating with their skills in an emerging community.

In a poignant passage, we meet Virgil, who despite benefiting from over \$20,000 in home-building volunteer efforts, tells his friend Lupton how disgusted he is to see a van of fresh volunteers arrive. Virgil bitterly recounts how he must endure their stinging “compliments” on his clean house and smart children (which the volunteers clearly did not expect). He knows the volunteers are only trying to be nice, but “I see through their words, I know what they really think.”

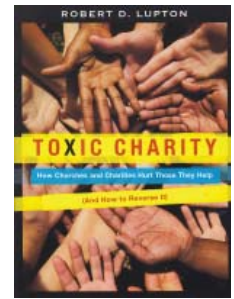
The book details four successful projects of Lupton’s FCS Urban Ministries (Focused Community Strategies) in

Atlanta. They have reclaimed four southeast Atlanta neighborhoods in a long, involved process. Members of the nearest church actually made new homes in the affected communities, building relationships and credibility on the personal level before starting any rescue work.

Watching the 2009 movie *Precious*, I know I wasn’t the only liberal who squirmed as *Precious*’s mother Mary (Mo’Nique) made all her life decisions based on how they would affect her welfare check. Did you think “What have we created?” when that sank in? This book will make you think the same thing, but at least Lupton shows us a path around that swamp with constructive principles after his tough questions.

Development and empowerment is not the easy road. It takes years, and a deep personal commitment that is essential and irreplaceable. Consider: Would you uproot your family and move to a distressed neighborhood, to begin a personal years-long and guaranteed uncomfortable process of earning trust and building relationships among those from a different culture than yours, to try to rescue a community sensitively?

Reviewer Jim Trammel nominates most social workers he knows for sainthood.



Voices 2015 Closing the Gaps

Many of us dream of a more just society. For example, for almost a decade, central Kentuckians have talked about closing the “achievement gap,” in which children from poor families score lower on standardized test than do children from middle- and upper-class families. What are the causes for this gap and can it be closed?

Closing the achievement gap and other gaps are mileposts on the route to a more just society. In *Voices 2015* we will examine a variety of gaps that separate some in central Kentucky from others. *Voices 2015* will be a series of speakers, panels and films that will 1) look at the evidence of gaps 2) consider the possible cause for the gaps and 3) suggest actions that can be taken to close the gaps. Join us in September and October as we create a To-Do list for a more just society. See *Peaceways* in September and the CKCPJ Facebook page for on-going information.

CKCPJ social justice committee

by Mary Ann Ghosal

The newest committee of the Central Kentucky Council for Peace and Justice deals with social justice and hopes to work on one or two pressing social issues at a time. The two that are currently being considering are immigration and gentrification.

Current efforts on immigration include two must-see films. Kentuckians for the Commonwealth will show *Who Was Day-ani Cristal?* on August 6 at 6:30 pm in the Village Drive Library off Versailles Road. The documentary retraces the journey of a young man who attempted to come to the U.S. through the Arizona desert. Later in the summer the social justice commit-

tee will show the short film, *The Cost of Family Detention*, an examination of our country’s new prison system for immigrant mothers and children. There will be discussion following the film. (Details forthcoming via MailChimp.)

The committee’s second topic, gentrification, involves the buying and renovating of property in deteriorated neighborhoods by well-off entities, thereby improving property values. This practice can also, however, disrupt social networks and displace low-income (often minority) people and businesses. Gentrification is a complex and controversial process, and

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KVH seeks to improve health care

Are you a Kentuckian with a story about health care to share? If so, make **YOUR VOICE HEARD!**

Kentucky Voices for Health (KVH), a coalition of individuals and organizations working together to improve the health of all Kentuckians, is collecting personal stories throughout the state from people who have obtained health insurance through Kynect or Medicaid, since 2013.

KVH is working to collect these stories about how access to health care has impacted their lives and wants to hear from

consumers about how their chosen plan is

benefiting them and what improvements might be made to improve the health care system in Kentucky.

We collect stories about:

- Individuals, families, and small businesses;
- people with pre-existing conditions;
- those newly insured;
- those receiving premium tax credits;
- stories about those using their plans to get care;
- and many more.

If you have a story to share or want to participate in collecting health care stories for KVH, please contact Ryan Morris, KVH story bank coordinator, at ryan.morris@kyvoicesforhealth.org or 202-210-5279.



New religious leaders arrive in Lexington

by Margaret Gabriel

Representatives of CKCPJ met with Bishop John Stowe, the newly-appointed bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Lexington, on June 1. Bishop Stowe welcomed the representatives, saying that when he arrives in a new community one of his first tasks is to meet with the local peace and justice group. "It's nice that the peace and justice people came to me," Bishop Stowe said.

Since his installation on May 5 at the Cathedral of Christ the King in Lexington, Bishop Stowe has traveled the 50-county diocese (which takes in all of central and eastern Kentucky) to meet the people who will be under his spiritual leadership.

Long-time CKCPJ member Richard Mitchell gave Bishop Stowe an overview of the history and mission of the organization which included information about demographics and the current focus of CKCPJ. Bishop Stowe asked about the Jewish and Muslim communities in Lexington.

CKCPJ invited Bishop Stowe to participate in the June 23 rally sponsored by the Lexington Working Families Campaign promoting the increase in Lexington's minimum wage. He was also invited to speak for Voices 2015, the details of which are to be determined.

On July 10, Temple Adath Israel welcomes Rabbi David Wirschafter to its pulpit, the first time that a native Lexingtonian will be a spiritual leader of the Jewish community in his hometown, according to a story by Jonathan Miller in

the website of the Jewish Federation of the Bluegrass.

Before his return to Lexington, Rabbi Wirschafter served communities in New York; California; Minneapolis and Ames, Iowa.

Rabbi Wirschafter's wife, Shana Lisa Sippy, is a Professor of Comparative Religions. They have two children: Zachariah Wirschafter Sippy, 15, and Emanuelle Wirschafter Sippy, 12. CKCPJ looks forward to meeting with Rabbi Wirschafter.

Margaret Gabriel edits *Peaceways*

Submissions to *Peaceways*

Articles submitted for publication in *Peaceways* should show an awareness of and sensitivity to the CKCPJ's mission and concerns. Articles submitted by non-Council members are encouraged.

Articles of varying lengths are encouraged. News items (50-250 words) are welcome; announcements or reports of council-sponsored events (or events of council member groups) are likely to receive priority. Short personal essays reflecting an individual's experience of peace and justice-related events and community action or activism are encouraged, as well.

Feature articles should be no longer than 500 words, unless you are willing to have the piece cut to fit one page of *Peaceways* text. Pieces will be edited for clarity.

Please include references in the text for all quotations, statistics, and unusual facts. End- or footnotes are not used. We

Social justice committee

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the committee has been fortunate to be aided by the UK Geography Department, which has mapped housing information on the north side of Lexington in 2015. The committee has started to speculate about what steps a city like Lexington might take to ameliorate the negative effects of gentrification on individuals and neighborhoods. For example, could the Affordable Housing Trust Fund be coupled with land trusts or other legal structures to help low-income neighborhoods gain needed resources but also remain intact long-term?

The next meeting of the Social Justice Committee will be on Wednesday, July 8 (2nd Wednesday), 7 pm, Quaker Meetinghouse, 649 Price Avenue, Lexington. Anyone interested in working on one or both of these issues is welcome to attend.



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see www.peaceandjusticeky.org



The Central Kentucky Council for Peace and Justice
501 West Sixth Street
Lexington, KY 40508

“We can love through the window of our faith—we can see light and we can see hope.”

*Rev. Norvel Goff
Emanuel AME Church
Charleston, S.C., Sun., June 21, 2015*

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Is It Just Life?

by Billie Mallory

Following a recent weekend of violent shootings in Lexington, I called a friend who lives in the neighborhood where the shootings took place and asked if things had calmed down. His reply about the aftermath was, “It’s just life—nothing we can do about it.” His response caught me by surprise because he is a man of faith and a police officer who lives and works in that community.

As I often do, I reflected on what he said and why he feels that way. I realized that he knew the victims, including those who had died, and he likely had been on the scene late into the night. Or he might have been comforting family members and friends in a community where such violence has happened much too often. Regardless of the circumstances, the two

men who died in the violence were fathers, sons, brothers, or uncles of people who loved them, and many lives were changed forever.

When confronted over and over again with the ugly reality of senseless murders, it must seem hopeless, especially for those who experience violence on the front lines and not, as many of us do, from the distance of a television or computer screen.

I could not accept the reality of “nothing that we can do about it.” While we cannot bring back loved ones, we also cannot just accept senseless acts of violence. I had to offer words of comfort to my friend, but maybe they were more for myself—that we cannot accept this as “just life.”

Everyone gets tired and depressed and has moments of despair and pain. Maybe we even feel battle weary when confronted so often with such tragedies. Those of us who confront such harsh realities directly—police officers, EMS workers, doctors, nurses, social workers, activists or community members—cannot lose hope no matter what our faith or belief system may be. To do so would make life senseless, indeed.

We must gain strength from each other in such hard times. As the faithful, we must be truth tellers, justice seekers and hope bearers and shine light into darkness, to right the wrongs and to take care of the village. Those of us who serve in the public sector, human services or just people of faith—we must be the makers of peace, marshals of justice, judges of

righteousness. We must love and encourage each other and take care of our villages, wherever they may be.

Let me encourage you to keep the faith, hold onto hope, lift each other up in times of need and always enjoy the good times together!

Billie Mallory is a community activist.

Open letter

continued from page one

you can say: He shouldn’t have been leading a Bible Study? She shouldn’t have been at a Wednesday night church service?

White America, we have an empathy crisis. For reasons that are arguably complex but ultimately unjustifiable, what happens to Black America just doesn’t feel like it’s happening to us.

Because it isn’t.

Our ongoing history of institutionalized violence against black people coupled with the benefits we have incurred because of that violence must come to an end. We must commit ourselves, come hell or high water, to the transformation of our hearts, minds, penal system, public schools, housing regulations, police forces, culture and more.

It isn’t the apple. It’s the tree. It isn’t a glitch. It’s the system, and until White America takes the tree and the system apart, the violence will continue.

Reva Russell English is a writer and musician who lives in Lexington with her family. She blogs at <http://revawilliams.tumblr.com/>.

Readers asked to sign letter to Mayor Gray

In April 2015, Mayor Jim Gray proposed “hiring 10 new officers and buying new patrol cars” and made a \$2.5 million commitment to do so. However, Mayor Gray and the Lexington Police Department (LPD) must be held accountable for the lack of a diversity policy within the LPD.

Currently no diversity policy exists, but a letter has been sent to Mayor Gray, demanding a diversity policy be put in place, specifying four demands for meeting this requirement according to the people of Lexington.

You can read and sign the letter at http://kyjusticeco.nationbuilder.com/petition_letter_for_diversity_policy_in_lpd

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