

# Peaceways

CENTRAL KENTUCKY COUNCIL FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE December 2015

## Voices 2015: Closing the Gaps Young Afghan peacemakers speak in Lexington

by T. Kerby Neill

*Tolerance will end war. Respect will foster love.  
Openness will encourage creativity.*

On Nov. 4, Lexington heard from Aref Dostyar and Sofia Ramyar, peacemakers who are working to make peace come alive in their war-torn country of Afghanistan. The program was co-sponsored by the Peace Studies Program of the University of Kentucky and CKCPJ. Dostyar and Ramyar, both in their mid-20s, are respectively the founder and executive director of Afghans for Progressive Thinking (APT).

Dostyar currently serves as a fellow at the Center for International Policy in Washington, D.C. In January he returns to Notre Dame's Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies to finish his master's degree. Ramyar is visiting the U.S. to seek financial support for APT's efforts in Afghanistan.

Their brief presentation on today's Afghanistan was followed by a longer discussion with the thoroughly engaged audience in the packed conference room of UK's Marksbury Building. Afghanistan

is now America's longest war and the discussion ranged over questions about the purpose of U.S. involvement, daily life in Afghanistan, who are the Taliban, and prospects for peace.

The speakers saw U.S. goals in Afghanistan as eliminating a haven for anti-western terrorism and building a stable Afghan nation. Afghanistan is located in a highly strategic area—bordered by Iran on the west, Pakistan on the east and south, three former Soviet Republics on the north, and, via the narrow Wakhan corridor, to China.

Until the creation of Pakistan in 1947, Afghanistan also shared a border and many ties with India. Dostyar suggested that Pakistan seeks greater influence in Afghanistan because of Pakistan's conflict with India, and fears being squeezed between India and Afghanistan as an Indian ally. Dostyar doubted if the forces collectively described as "Taliban" could be effective without safe havens and arms

support within Pakistan. The U. S. provides considerable support to Pakistan. Dostyar wondered if greater U.S. pressure might lead Pakistan to check factions that support fighters in Afghanistan. When asked if the U.S. is in Afghanistan to exploit Afghan energy and mineral resources, Dostyar said he saw little evidence of that. He noted that China has active mining interests in Afghanistan and might also wish for greater Afghan stability.

While people in the U.S. often see news snippets of troops patrolling arid, rural areas of Afghanistan, or smoke rising from a terrorist attack in an urban area, Afghans are gamely trying to live their lives in spite of deteriorating security. Since 2001, Afghanistan has held three democratic elections, and increased diplomatic relations from three countries (under the Taliban) to virtually all countries. The number of Afghan youth attending high schools has

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## Hiroshima Trees of Peace

by Rebecca Glasscock

On August 6, 1945, a 9,000-pound U-235 bomb was dropped on the city of Hiroshima from a U.S. B-29 plane christened the "Enola Gay." This city, 500 miles from Tokyo, had a population of 350,000. The nuclear bomb exploded 2,000 feet over the ground, destroying five square miles of the city. Ninety percent of the city was destroyed and 80,000 people died immediately. Thousands more died later.

The survivors included 170 trees in 55 locations, within about one and a quarter miles of ground zero. Most of the trees and other vegetation were destroyed, however, so in 1951, the first president of Hiroshima University sent a letter to universities in Europe, the United States, and Asia asking to be sent tree seeds and seedlings to replant their campus. He said that "Green is the color of vividness, the color of hope, the color of peace." The

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Aref Dostyar, founder of Afghans for Progressive Thinking, addresses UK students and community activists as a Voices 2015 speaker.

# Death penalty abolitionist visits Kentucky

by Margaret Gabriel, Peaceways Editor

Sister Helen Prejean, a member of the Congregation of St. Joseph and an advocate for the abolition of the death penalty, shared her experience and insight at Pax Christi Church, Lexington, on Nov. 10. Before and after her talk, Sister Helen signed copies of her best-selling book, *Dead Man Walking* and her 2004 book, *Death of Innocents*, which addresses the execution of two men she believes were innocent.

Sister Helen was invited by the Kentucky Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty. In addition to Lexington, she spoke in northern Kentucky and Louisville. Father Pat Delahanty, chair of the KCADP, credited Sister Helen's books, speaking tours, and activism for the trend away from the general public's favoring of the death penalty. In Kentucky, he said, "death penalty legislation has been introduced by both parties. It's no longer a political issue but a human life issue."

Sister Helen told the assembly that her journey as a spiritual advisor to death row inmates awakened her to justice. She told of the discussions of sisters in her community, with some speaking out in favor of working for justice and others, including her, saying, "we're not politicians, we're not social workers, we're nuns!"

She credits Sister of Notre Dame Maria Augusta Neal, a social justice advocate and professor emerita of sociology at Emmanuel College, Boston, saying "[Sister Maria Augusta] opened my eyes in a way I'd never seen," when she said that it's not in God's plan for people to be poor.

Realizing that she didn't know any poor people, Sister Helen moved to the St. Thomas Housing Project in New Orleans and started learning. She heard stories about her neighbors' fear of law enforcement. She learned about white privilege. "I've always loved teaching," Sister Helen said. At St. Thomas, "I just figured my classroom got a little bigger."

Sister Helen's relationship with Patrick Sonnier, a death row inmate at Louisiana State Penitentiary, began in 1982 when she was asked to write him a letter, and ended in 1984 when, as his spiritual advisor, she witnessed his execution. "I thought I was just going to be writing letters," she said, "but let me introduce you to sneaky Jesus! 'Hey, Sister Helen, will you write a letter?' I didn't know it would become a book, then a movie, an opera,

and I'd go on the road and be on the road for the rest of my life!"

After one of her initial meetings with Sonnier, Sister Helen asked to see the information about the crime he and his brother, Eddie, had committed: the murder and the rape of Loretta Ann Bourque and the execution-style murder of her and her boyfriend, David LaBlanc. "I couldn't wrap my mind around it," she said. "What am I doing, I'm with these people who killed these kids?"

It was at the pardon board hearing, when the state of Louisiana took statements concerning Sonnier's execution from family and friends, that Sister Helen said she realized she had made a terrible mistake in not reaching out to the families of the teenagers who were

murdered. That day, for the first time, she met Godfrey Bourque and Lloyd LeBlanc, and could see the importance of ministry to the family of the victims. She easily understood the anger the Bourque family directed at her and believes that was the reason she had not contacted them. But Lloyd LeBlanc reproached Sister Helen, saying "You never came to see us."

Sister Helen calls Lloyd "the hero of *Dead Man Walking*. He taught me what it meant to go down the road of forgiveness." Since that time, Sister Helen has accompanied five additional men to their executions, and has ministered to many others.

In 1983, 85 percent of people asked were in favor of the death penalty, Sister Helen said. Guards were told to do their jobs, which not only included execution, but practicing various scenarios of be-

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Sister Helen Prejean, author of *Dead Man Walking* and *Death of Innocents*, calls Kentuckians' commitment to abolition of the death penalty solid. "You're not afraid to learn."

## 2016 Annual Award Nominations

The CKCPJ Board of Directors is accepting nominations for its 2016 Annual Awards. Recipients will be recognized at the Annual Dinner and Networking Fair on March 6. Awards include:

**Chuck Sohner/Workers' Advocate**, which recognizes a person or group in Central Kentucky who has contributed to civil rights or fairer labor practices. The award recognizes current as well as longstanding efforts.

**Peacemaker of the Year**, which recognizes a person or group who has made major efforts to address issues of peace, justice, human rights, or environmental protection/improvement, in the Central Kentucky area in the past year.

**Lifetime of Waging Peace**, a celebration of a Central Kentucky person or group whose personal commitment and efforts over

a significant period have made major contributions to the cause of peace, justice, rights, or environmental protection/improvement.

**Youth Peacemaker**, which recognizes the efforts of a Central Kentuckian or Central Kentucky youth group (members under age 25) who make important contributions to advancing awareness, developing skills, or leading actions with respect to peace, justice, human rights, or environmental protection/improvement.

To nominate individuals or groups, request information from [peaceandjusticeky@gmail.com](mailto:peaceandjusticeky@gmail.com) or call (859) 488-1448.

## Hiroshima Trees of Peace

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response was great and the burned-out grounds were replanted.

Over the ensuing years, the city of Hiroshima, tree experts, and citizen volunteers have lovingly tended the trees that survived the bomb. Each bears a name plate reading Hibakujumoku (survivor tree).

In 2011, Nassrine Azimi, the former Director of the Hiroshima Office of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) thought back to 1951, when the global community sent seeds to Hiroshima. Perhaps now was the time to have seeds travel in the other direction. After discussing the idea of sharing A-bomb tree seeds with botanical gardens, universities, and others with strong commitments to trees and to peace, her idea became a reality. Green Legacy Hiroshima, an initiative of UNITAR and the Asian Network of Trust (ANT) Hiroshima with support from the Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation and the University of Hiroshima, was born.

Applications for seeds are accepted throughout the year. Applicants must demonstrate knowledge of trees, a plan for the immediate and long-term care of the seeds and trees, and an understanding of the symbolism behind this initiative.

The seeds are carefully harvested, inspected in line with the quarantine regu-

lations of the receiving country, and kept in the storage facility at the Hiroshima Botanical Garden until being shipped. In August, Lexington received its shipment of ginkgo and Asian persimmon seeds. The ginkgo seeds came from Hiroshima's historical Shukkeien Garden, and the persimmon seeds were harvested at Atago Pond and in Motomachi.

Biologist Marvin Ruffner is caring for these seeds, some of which have sprouted. He will start others in the spring. As the seedlings grow into saplings, they will be planted as symbols of peace in our community. Proposed sites include the University of Kentucky, Bluegrass Community and Technical College's Peace Meal Gardens, the Quaker Meetinghouse, and downtown Lexington.

The Green Legacy Hiroshima's vision is to eventually have trees planted on former nuclear test sites, as well as on sites of conflict. These trees of peace symbolize regeneration and reconciliation. As Nassrine Azimi said, "While silently testifying to the inhumanity of nuclear weapons, they also tell us of the importance of resilience, tolerance and living in harmony with nature."

To see a map of the A-bombed trees, go to [http://www.green-greetings.com/en/map/h\\_map/index.html](http://www.green-greetings.com/en/map/h_map/index.html)

Rebecca is the faculty advisor for BCTC's Students for Peace and Earth 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), Richard Mitchell, Bruce Mundy, Steve Pavey, Nadia Rasheed, 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 (proofreaders). The views expressed in *Peaceways* are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of CKCPJ.

*Member Organizations:* ACLU-Central Kentucky Chapter; Ahava Center for Spiritual Living; Amnesty International, UK Chapter; Bahá'ís of Lexington; Berea Friends Meeting; Bluegrass Central Labor Council, AFL-CIO; Bluegrass Domestic Violence Program; Bluegrass United Church of Christ; Catholic Action Center; Central Christian Church; Commission for Peace and Justice, Catholic Diocese of Lexington; Gay and Lesbian Services Organization; Humanist Forum of Central Kentucky; Hunter Presbyterian Church; Islamic Society of Central Kentucky; Jewish Federation of the Bluegrass; Kentuckians for the Commonwealth; Kentucky Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty, Central Kentucky Chapter; Kentucky Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights; Kentucky Resources Council; Lexington Fair Housing Council; Lexington Fairness; Lexington Friends Meeting; Lexington Hispanic Association (Asociación de Hispanos Unidos); Lexington Labor Council, Jobs with Justice Committee; Lexington Living Wage Campaign; Lexington Socialist Student Union; Maxwell Street Presbyterian Church; Newman Center at UK; North East Lexington Initiative; One World Film Festival; Students for Peace and Earth Justice (Bluegrass Community and Technical College); Peacecraft; The Plantory; Progress (student group at Transylvania University); Second Presbyterian Church; Shambhala Center; Sustainable Communities Network; Union Church at Berea; Unitarian Universalist Church of Lexington; United Nations Association, Bluegrass Chapter.



A group of Lexingtonians is participating in planting trees of peace that have been received from Hiroshima. In the spring, the trees will be planted at UK, BCTC, the Quaker Meeting House or downtown Lexington.

# PEACEWAYS

*Peaceways* is published ten times a year by the Central Kentucky Council for Peace and Justice, 1588 Leestown Rd Ste 130-138, Lexington, KY 40511. Deadline for calendar items for the February issue is Jan. 10. Contact (859) 488-1448 or email [peacewayseditor@gmail.com](mailto:peacewayseditor@gmail.com).

# 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.*

## Mon., Dec. 7

**CKCPJ steering committee meeting**, 7 p.m. Quaker Meeting House, 649 Price Ave., Lexington. Discussion will include planning for upcoming committee meetings and the Annual Dinner.

## Wed., Dec. 9

**CKCPJ Social Justice Committee**, 7 pm, Quaker Meeting House, 649 Price Ave., Lexington. Discussion topics will include various housing justice matters.

## Thurs., Dec. 10

**Human Rights Day. *The Kite Runner***, 6:30 pm, Kentucky Theatre, 214 East Main Street, Lexington. Free. Sponsored by the Kentucky Division United Nations Association, Lexington Sister Cities and BTC Students for Peace and Earth Justice. In addition to the screening, the evening will also include a bake sale to benefit the work of Doctors Without Borders in Afghanistan.

## Sun., Dec. 13

**Snack and Share**, Temple Adath Israel, 4-6 p.m. In these days of polarity, it is even more important to understand each other. Second Sunday gathers people of various faith traditions to discuss common experiences. In December, the group will discuss celebrations that are important to your tradition. Bring a craft, artifact, or symbol, or share music to lend understanding of the richness of your tradition. Bring a snack to share.

## Tues., Dec. 15

**Lexington Working Families Campaign**. 7 p.m., Quaker Meeting House, 649 Price Ave., Lexington. The meeting will focus on the ongoing discussion of the minimum wage in Lexington.

## Wed-Fri. Dec. 16-18

**Faith and Community Christmas Store**, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. each day, Southland Christian Church, 2349 Richmond Road (old Lexington Mall). The store provides free, gently used toys to children, and gifts to people of all ages. No registration needed to shop for gifts. To register for one or more volunteer shifts or to make donations, see [www.godsnet.info](http://www.godsnet.info).

## Wed., Dec. 16

**CKCPJ Peace Action Committee**, 7 p.m., Quaker Meeting House, 649 Price Ave., Lexington. Discussion topics will include health care reform and climate change.

## Mon., Jan. 11

**CKCPJ steering committee meeting**, 7 p.m. Quaker Meeting House, 649 Price Ave., Lexington. Discussion will include planning for upcoming committee meetings and the Annual Dinner.

## Tues., Jan. 12

**PFLAG**, St. Michael's Episcopal Church, 2025 Bellefonte Dr., Lexington, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. A presentation about ancient and modern thought regarding sexual orientation and gender identity from Hindu, Muslim, Christian and Jewish perspectives. Presented by Shana Sippy, teacher of Religion and Gender Studies at Carleton College.

## Wed., Jan. 13

**CKCPJ Social Justice Committee**, 7 pm, Quaker Meeting House, 649 Price Ave., Lexington. Discussion topics will include various housing justice matters.

## Mon., Jan. 18

**One World Films**, Kentucky Theatre, 214 East Main Street, Lexington, 2:30. *Mandela: A Long Walk to Freedom*, 2013 British-South African biographical film directed by Justin Chadwick, based on the autobiography of former South African President Nelson Mandela. The screening is part of Lexington's celebration of Martin Luther King Day and is free.

## Mon., Jan. 18

**Martin Luther King Day holiday**  
Events in Lexington will include a 10 a.m. Freedom March (gather at Heritage Hall, 9 a.m.) followed by a Holiday Celebration Commemorative Program, 11 a.m., Heritage Hall.

## Tues., Jan. 19

**Lexington Working Families Campaign**. 7 p.m., Quaker Meeting House, 649 Price Ave., Lexington. The meeting will focus on the ongoing discussion of the minimum wage in Lexington.

## Wed., Jan. 20

**CKCPJ Peace Action Committee**, 7 p.m., Quaker Meeting House, 649 Price Ave., Lexington. Discussion topics will include health care reform and climate change.

## Sun., Jan. 31

**One World Films**, Kentucky Theatre, 214 East Main Street, Lexington, 2:30. *Imber's Left Hand*, the story of an artist with ALS (Lou Gehrig's Disease) who, in the last months of his life, learned to paint with his left hand and then both hands tied together. A powerful documentary.

## Early March

**CKCPJ Annual Dinner and Networking Fair**, Imani Baptist Church, 1555 Georgetown Rd., Lexington. Program will include recognition of the people and groups in Central Kentucky who wage peace and justice.

## Your Event Here

Send information about your event to [peacewayseditor@gmail.com](mailto:peacewayseditor@gmail.com). Send notification about February events by Jan. 10.

*And on earth,  
peace*

*Best wishes of the season*

*Central Kentucky Council for Peace and Justice*

# One World Films: *A Lexington treasure*

One World Films is a non-profit organization formed in 1998 to establish an annual film festival in Lexington.

One World Films believes film can present issues of culture, society, ethnicity, gender and the politics that surrounds them in ways that increase understanding and encourage creative thinking about complex social situations. We therefore challenge the increasingly diverse population of Lexington and central Kentucky on these issues through our annual One World Film Festival: a festival with speakers worth hearing, discussions worth having and—most important—current films worth seeing.

Since its inception, the One World Film Festival has shown over 130 films to over 18,000 festival attendees. Our films have been shown at a variety of venues including the historic Kentucky Theater, the Lexington Public Library Theater, the University of Kentucky, and Transylvania University. Some screenings are followed with discussions about the issues brought up in the films.

Festival highlights have included film participants and directors discussing their work with audiences, and panelists who are expert on the issues raised in the films. All festival screenings are free and open to the public.

OWF board members are all volunteers, and the film festival relies on the generosity of local businesses, community groups, and individuals. Whenever possible, the names of sponsors appear in mailings, posters, and the programs handed out at each film.

Dates for the 2016 Festival are January 31 to March 5. Films will include:

- *Imber's Left Hand* (Jan. 31)
- *Leviathan*
- *McFarland USA*
- *Woman in Gold*
- *I Am Eleven*
- *Dallas Buyer's Club*
- *Today's Special*
- *Raise the Roof*
- *The Island President*
- *Poverty, Inc.*
- *Jiro Dreams of Sushi*

For more information call Annette Mayer, chair, One World Films, (859) 266-6073. Watch *Peaceways* for the dates of specific screenings.

## MONTHLY MEETINGS

**CKCPJ Steering Committee Meetings**, third Monday, 7 p.m. More info: (859) 488-1448 or [peaceandjusticeky@gmail.com](mailto:peaceandjusticeky@gmail.com). (January meeting is scheduled for the second Monday due to Martin Luther King Day.) All are welcome!

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

**Migrant Network Coalition**, first Monday, noon-1:15 p.m., GLOBAL LEX, 1306 Versailles Road, Lexington. Contact Lindsay Mattingly, [lmatingly@lexpublib.org](mailto:lmatingly@lexpublib.org), (859) 231-5514.

**PFLAG Central Kentucky**, second Tuesday, 6:30-8:30 p.m. LGBTQ individuals of all ages, family members, friends and allies are welcome. St. Michael's Episcopal Church, 2025 Bellefonte Dr., Lexington. [info@pflagcentralky.org](mailto:info@pflagcentralky.org) or (859) 338-4393. Speakers followed by confidential support group meeting.

**Bluegrass Fairness of Central Kentucky**, second Tuesday, 7:30 p.m., Lexington Public Central Library, 140 E. Main St., Lexington. Contact Craig Cammack, chair, (859) 951-8565 or [info@lexfair.org](mailto:info@lexfair.org).

**Wednesday Night GLSO "Heart to Heart" discussion group**, 7 p.m. at the Pride Center, 389 Waller Ave., Lexington. GLSO operates Kentucky's only Pride Center, where they've been quietly providing services to the GLBTQQIA community for decades. More info, hours Pride Center is open, and other links at [www.glsso.org](http://www.glsso.org).

**Humanist Forum of Central Kentucky**, first Thursday, 7 p.m., 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](mailto:staci@olliegee.com) or (859) 797-2662.

**Kentuckians for the Commonwealth**, third Thursday, 7 p.m., 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 p.m. Participation Station, 869 Sparta Court, Lexington. Call (859) 272-7891 or visit [www.namilex.org](http://www.namilex.org).

**Christian-Muslim Dialogue Program**, fourth Saturday, 10 a.m.-noon. All are welcome. Locations vary, call (859) 277-5126. The Christian-Muslim dialogue promotes understanding and mutual respect between Christians and Muslims. By exploring moral, cultural and political factors shaping the current context, it promotes personal and collective responsibility to build a more just and peaceful world.

**Dance Jam**, every Tuesday, 5:30-7 p.m., Quaker Meeting House, 649 Price Ave. Move to the extent you are able. Sponsored by Motion Matters, \$7 per session to cover space rental. Contact Pamela, [info@motionmatters.org](mailto:info@motionmatters.org), (859) 351-3142.

**Movies with Spirit**, second Friday of every month. Unitarian Universalist Church, 3564 Clay's Mill Road, Lexington. Potluck at 6 p.m., film at 7.

**National Action Network**, third Thursday each month, 7-8:30 p.m. at the Central Library, Lexington.

To include a regular meeting of your organization in this space, contact Margaret Gabriel, [peacewayseditor@gmail.com](mailto:peacewayseditor@gmail.com).

## *Which Israelis am I supposed to hate?*

# I Shall Not Hate

by Izzeldin Abuelaish

Review by Kate Cunningham

*I Shall Not Hate.* The title alone is a challenge and an inspiration.

The author, Izzeldin Abuelaish, is a Palestinian physician, trained in Israel, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Britain and Europe, who lost three daughters and a niece during the 2009 Gaza War when his family's home was shelled by the Israel Defense Force.

Izzeldin describes, in grim detail, rushing upstairs to the girls' bedroom after a huge explosion rocked the entire building, to find parts of his daughters' bodies strewn around the room. One girl survived the blast, with serious shrapnel wounds that nearly took her life.

If anyone has cause to hate, it is Izzeldin. Yet, his entire life had been devoted to making peace between Israel and Palestine; his girls had even attended a peace camp in Santa Fe, New Mexico. He had schooled his family that the way of retaliation and hatred leads only to more violence. He made a conscious choice, after his tragic personal loss, to forgo hatred and turn to even greater humanitarian efforts.

He established "Daughters for Life," a foundation honoring his daughters Mayar, Aya and Bessan. Its purpose is to help educate Palestinian and Israeli girls, just as his own daughters had been educated, so that others will have the chance to lead their countries in the path of peace.

I heard Izzeldin speak at the Chautauqua Institution (New York) in August 2015, in a week devoted to lectures on "the Mideast," and I felt compelled to read his book.

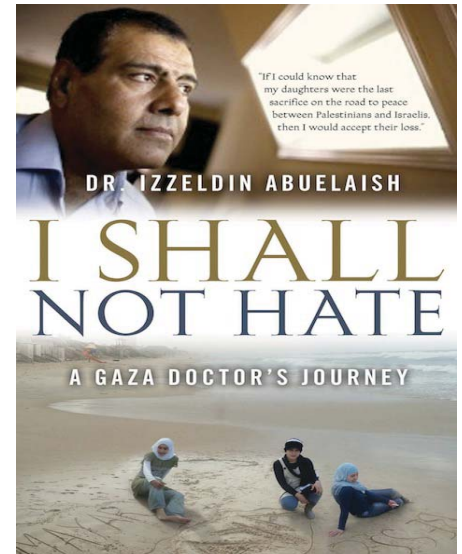
If you want to know in exasperating detail what crossing from Gaza to Israel means, Izzeldin describes it. More than once, he outlines the stultifying waits and dehumanizing searches. There is not just one checkpoint and search, but many, ending in a 65-yard walk (with bags, luggage and children) to the other side.

The crossings are so arduous and lengthy that practicalities forced Izzeldin to rent an apartment in Israel so that he could get to his hospital shift on time, every day, Monday through Thursday. He returned home to Gaza for weekends.

When his wife died of cancer at his hospital in Israel in 2008, Izzeldin wanted to accompany her remains, in the ambulance, back home to Gaza for burial. This was not permitted. He had to travel separately, go through the border crossing alone and then run over to the Gaza ambulance, which took over from the Israeli ambulance at the crossing. And Izzeldin was a noted physician at the Israeli hospital! He was well known, not only in Gaza, but also in Israel. In addition to his noteworthy achievements as a fertility specialist, Izzeldin was a regular contributor to an Israeli news program; when news anchor Shlomi Eldar wanted to know what was happening in Gaza, he would phone Izzeldin for a report.

Immediately after the blast that took his three daughters and niece, Izzeldin phoned Eldar, urging emergency help for the surviving children — trauma care that could only be provided at an Israeli hospital. Eldar took the phone call, even though he was live on the air at the time, as he knew that if Izzeldin was phoning at air time, the reason must be serious.

This was during the siege of Gaza, after all. Eldar held his cell phone close to the station's microphone, so all in Israel could hear one father's anguish and deep despair. This human voice of one suffering family in Gaza may have helped inspire the



ceasefire that followed a couple of days later.

When asked about his loss, Izzeldin says, "Which Israelis am I supposed to hate? . . . The doctors and nurses I work with? The ones who are trying to save [niece] Ghaida's life and [daughter] Shatha's eyesight? The babies I have delivered? Families like the Madmoonys who gave me work and shelter when I was a kid? . . . To those who seek retaliation, I say, even if I got revenge on all the Israeli people, would it bring my daughters back? Hatred is an illness. It prevents healing and peace."

For a full picture of life in Gaza, I recommend this book. See also [www.daughtersforlife.com](http://www.daughtersforlife.com).

*Kate is a longtime Louisville-based activist for peace, justice and a new U.S. foreign policy with regard to Israel and Palestine.*

CKCPJ invites readers of *Peaceways* to sign a petition to the Kentucky State House, the Kentucky State Senate, and Governor Steve Beshear, which reads:

"Governor-elect Matt Bevin said that he wants to dismantle Kentucky's healthcare exchange, known as Kynect, by the end of 2016. The consequences of repealing the Medicaid expansion would be enormous. More than 400,000 people would lose the coverage they have just gained. Kentucky would join the remaining 19 states with a gap, where some people are too poor to receive help on the exchange or too well-off to qualify for the old Medicaid program."

Will you sign the petition too? To add your name please go to [petitions.moveon.org/sign/stop-gov-elect-matt-bevin](http://petitions.moveon.org/sign/stop-gov-elect-matt-bevin)

## Afghan peacemakers

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increased from 900,000 to near 8 million, 2.5 million of whom are girls. Crops are harvested and communities celebrate their family, religious, and community festivals. Afghanistan is capable of major development but in desperate need of improved infrastructure. Investment in infrastructure has little impact, though, if a new school, library, clinic or bridge is soon blown up. Afghans hope for a negotiated end to the current war and feel that collaboration between the U.S. and all the major regional players is essential to such an outcome.

The Afghan speakers found it difficult to provide a clear description of the Taliban, explaining that several fundamentalist Islamic groups contribute to the destabilization of Afghanistan including Arab fighters and even ISIS elements. Some of the groups are heavily propagandized to believe they are fighting “enemies of Islam” and do not even realize that they are attacking Muslims. Still they see the armed struggle as more concerned with issues of power than religious differences.

Dostyar and Ramyar emphasized that Afghanistan is a very diverse country and that their work to build a more peaceful and cohesive Afghanistan is grounded in contact theory and critical thinking.

Ramyar portrayed their efforts to promote relationships and discussion between diverse students in 30 Afghan universities. They ask students to share their experiences and to question assumptions they have about other groups or the future of their country. APT also offers intensive leadership training with Afghan and international instructors. When Kentucky students, who had visited the impressive APT web site, asked how the young Afghans accomplished so much in

such a short time, Dostyar spoke of the great needs in Afghanistan which make it possible to have a big impact with limited resources. The Afghan educational system is hierarchical and questioning is discouraged. Students are hungry for open discussion.



Sofia Ramyar

When APT offers workshops for university students, groups sit in circles; questions and ideas are affirmed and respected. Students often want to gather later with APT staff and talk well into the night. The APT staff are armed for these encounters with low-budget tools: encouragement, hot water and tea.

Afghans for Progressive Thinking also enriches the experience of students in Afghanistan and in other countries by organizing discussions and debates via Skype. Two universities in the U.S. are currently involved in encounters with Afghan students. UK students and faculty showed an interest in joining this adventure, noting the strength of UK’s debate team, which recently defeated Harvard’s debate team in a national competition. The UK Peace Studies program hopes the Nov. 4 presentation by Afghan peacemakers will sow ongoing dialogue between UK and Afghan students who now realize they are only a Skype connection apart.

*Kerby teaches in the UK PeaceStudies program.*

## Sister Helen Prejean

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havior. An execution supervisor with five executions behind him told Sister Helen, “In my gut, I know I’m not supposed to be doing this. The Supreme Court legalizing it doesn’t cut it. We’re not meant to kill each other.”

Sister Helen encouraged her audience to participate in prayerful reflection, saying “dialogue comes from us, the people. Watch a pot boil,” she said. “The bubbles start at the bottom. The Holy Spirit starts at the bottom of the pot. We share experience and knowledge.” She also encouraged participation in the Kentucky Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty and commended Father Delahanty for his leadership and activism. “You bump Pat Delanty and information about the death penalty will come out his ear,” she said. “Belong to the coalition and be ready to make the call. Make Kentucky a ‘life state,’” she said.



## Have you ordered your license plate?

243 people have committed to carrying a message of peace on their cars.

Won't you join them?

[www.peaceandjusticeky.org](http://www.peaceandjusticeky.org)

## 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.

We accept articles of varying lengths. 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 encourage submissions to be queried to the editor at

[peacewayseditor@gmail.com](mailto:peacewayseditor@gmail.com) before writing a unique feature article intended solely for *Peaceways*.

For all submissions, the author’s name, address, and phone number should appear on the body of the submitted text. If you submit material that has been published or which you are also submitting to other publishers, be sure to indicate this. Also include information about your relationship to any organization or issue mentioned in the article for inclusion in a biographical reference at the end of the story. Submissions should be made in Word format *via* email. Book reviews are usually solicited by the editor but we welcome inquiries from potential reviewers.

Submission deadline is the 10th of each month. *Peaceways* is published 10 times a year. The next issue will come out in February.



*If the human race wishes to have a prolonged and indefinite period of material prosperity, they have only got to behave in a peaceful and helpful way toward one another.  
~ Winston Churchill*

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# LFUCG passes minimum wage ordinance

*by David Christiansen*

On November 19, after many months of deliberation, the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Council passed an ordinance establishing a higher minimum wage in Lexington. With minimum wage legislation stonewalled at both the federal and state levels, the Urban County Council decided it was necessary to take local action on this important issue. Louisville passed similar legislation last December. The Louisville measure grants increases gradually, topping out at \$9 per hour after three years. Thereafter it is indexed to the Consumer Price Index (CPI).

The first increase in Lexington (to \$8.20 an hour) is set for July 1, 2016. Additional increases are set as follows: \$9.15 an hour on July 1, 2017 and \$10.10 on July 1, 2018. An earlier measure to index the wage to the CPI was stripped from the ordinance in order to obtain enough votes for passage. In that same compromise, tipped workers were also withdrawn from the ordinance, so they will remain at their current federally mandated minimum level of \$2.13 per hour.

In a surprise announcement at the November 19 council meeting, Mayor Jim Gray indicated that he supported the measure and would sign it into law, thereby eliminating any concerns of a mayoral veto.

It is estimated that approximately 31,000 workers in Fayette County will benefit from this legislation, about one in every five workers in Lexington. The impact will be even broader, however, as workers spend their wage increases in the local economy.

There remains some concern over a

legal challenge to the Louisville ordinance that is currently being considered at the state Supreme Court. Earlier court decisions indicated that claims made by challenges to that ordinance were “without merit.”

Those who voted in support of the minimum wage increase included Jennifer Mossotti, James Brown, Jake Gibbs, Shevawn Akers, Peggy Henson, Angela Evans, Vice Mayor Steve Kay, Susan Lamb and Richard Moloney. Those who voted against the ordinance included Amanda Bledsoe, Russ Hensley, Bill Farmer, Fred Brown, Jennifer Scutchfield, Kevin Stinnett.

Finally, it should be noted that CKCPJ made passage of this legislation one of its top priorities for 2015. CKCPJ members were instrumental in supporting this effort through extensive participation with the Lexington Working Families Campaign. This coalition of prominent advocacy groups, organizations and progressive individuals played a vital role in making the legislation a reality.

There is much more to be done as we move toward a community that shares in the “common good” but for now we can all celebrate this victory!

•  
*David is the co-chair of CKCPJ.*



## ***Imperialism, American Style***

“Imperialism, American Style” was the title of a talk given by Jeff Freyman, professor emeritus of Political Science at Transylvania University and a peace activist on Oct. 29 at the public library in Lexington. The event was sponsored by Peace Action Committee of CKCPJ; the Committees of Correspondence for Democracy and Socialism; and Kentucky Workers League. The event was well attended and the presentation was excellent. Freyman traced the development of United States from the early 20th century when the economy was based on industry and the expansion of world markets by selling goods and getting raw materials. Today, Jeff said, finance capital dominates the economy which means financial speculation is a cornerstone of the world financial system. Jeff’s presentation was followed by thoughtful discussion.

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