

# Peaceways

CENTRAL KENTUCKY COUNCIL FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE December 2016

## Post-election CKJPJ statement

*by the CKCPJ steering committee*

The Central Kentucky Council for Peace and Justice is saddened by the election of Donald Trump but committed to moving forward the agenda of justice and peace. We hope President Trump will govern more moderately than he campaigned. We also hope the Kentucky Republican Party, which now controls state government, will act in more enlightened ways than they have promised. In both cases we will do our best to keep open minds and, as much as possible, to support both the national and state administrations.

However, it is clear that we cannot support unjust and unwise policies, particularly when they hurt the vulnerable among us. Rhetoric during the campaign and appointments so far suggest that racial and religious minorities, immigrants, refugees, women, and girls have much to fear and may be hurt. If any groups are unjustly targeted, we will not hesitate to vigorously but nonviolently oppose such actions and policies. We must resist the misguided and regressive agenda that motivates reactionary politicians at state and national levels.

But we need to do more than react to policies we see as flawed. It is important that we continue our work to prepare the way for positive change through education and advocacy. In the following, we list issues and concerns we are committed to advancing. While we cannot do significant work on them all, we will do as much as we can. Built into CKCPJ's DNA is a commitment to and track record of working in coalition with other groups.

If your organization works on one or more of these issues, please contact us. We want to work with you. If there does not appear to be a Kentucky organization that works on an issue that concerns you, contact us (859-488-1448 or [peaceandjusticeKY@gmail.com](mailto:peaceandjusticeKY@gmail.com)). We probably know who is working on that issue.

Finally, if no one is working on an issue that concerns you, consider joining CKCPJ. Our action teams are excellent places to find like-minded people who want to work on the issues that concern you.

It is crucial that our fellow citizens

understand the reality of an increasingly multicultural nation and world and that we demonstrate that such a world, far from endangering our way of life, will actually enrich our lives and our nation.

We pledge to continue our work to end the seemingly perpetual state of war in which our nation is mired.

We pledge to work for a society more accepting of its role as an integral part of a world community. Internationally, we will continue to work to make ours a country that works cooperatively with other nations to solve problems. We will work for a nation that consistently chooses diplomacy over military force as a preferred method of international problem solving. We will continue to advocate for non-violent solutions to conflict. Specifically, we pledge to promote and support the United Nations and its system as the essential and necessary institution for solving international problems.

We recognize that climate change is both real and a first-order threat to human life and all other life on this planet. Nuclear war and nuclear weapons are similar threats. We think globally and will work locally to educate Kentuckians about these threats. We pledge to work for public policies that reduce the dangers of these threats.

We are a nation of immigrants and believe prosperity is the result of the energy and innovation immigrants have brought. We need to welcome, not fear, immigrants. We oppose the deportation of immigrants, no matter their immigration status, who have obeyed laws, paid taxes, and otherwise made positive contributions to society. Poverty and international economic turmoil have brought immigrants, who, in a desperate effort to secure a better life for themselves and their families, have crossed our borders and are not recognized as legal immigrants.

We pledge to continue to seek humane and compassionate ways to deal with them and work for legislation that will provide a path through which the status of these immigrants is regularized.

We pledge to renew our work on behalf

of the poor and working poor and on behalf of working class voters, many of whom supported Trump's candidacy. We will support labor and labor unions and oppose "right-to-work" laws. We will continue our work for basic economic justice, including substantially increased minimum wages and affordable housing for all.

We refuse to accept an economy that rewards few but fails workers who are frustrated as expectations for a better life slip from their grasp. We will work with state and national groups for tax reform and innovative programs that distribute increases in our nation's wealth so low and middle income Americans enjoy a fair share of the benefits of our nation's success.

When Kentuckians and other Americans lose their jobs due to automation, robotics, or a changes in the market (*e.g.*, low-cost natural gas), we will advocate for generous income support for workers while they are retraining for other jobs. We will work for incentives to encourage employers to hire retrained workers.

We pledge to continue working with those who strive to end the racism, sexism, Islamophobia, and homophobia that haunt our nation's civic and political culture. We pledge to seek ways to make white Americans more aware of the structural advantages and privileges that whiteness confers. We oppose registries that stigmatize and target persons because of their religions faith, ethnic or racial background. We oppose stop-and-frisk laws that target people of color.

In the face of the likely dismantling of the Affordable Care Act and major changes to Medicare and Medicaid, we pledge to resume advocacy for health care reform, and in particular, for single payer health care.

Despite our individual fears, as a group CKCPJ is optimistic. A different world is possible, not a distant dream. This election means that the next few years will likely be a time of resistance. The demographic changes enriching our nation with more ethnic and cultural diversity will continue. A brighter future is not only possible, it is nearly certain.

# Voices 2016:

## Building Community Resisting Polarization

### A Tale of Two Cities

CKCPJ co-chair David Christiansen presented "A Tale of Two Cities" on October 26 at the Quaker Meeting House. The discussion explored factors that reduce affordable rental housing in Lexington.

Chief among these has been the stagnation of working wages while housing costs have increased. The US Department of Housing and Urban Development defines housing as affordable if a household spends 30 percent or less of its gross income on housing. Income inequality, David said, has further worsened the housing crisis as low-wage households struggle to maintain housing while high earners benefit from economic and policy changes that favor them.

Changes also have included a dramatic shift in federal housing policy. Over the last three decades the federal government's spending on new affordable housing has dropped from \$104 billion (in inflation-adjusted dollars) to just \$19.2 billion. At the same time, government policy (primarily the mortgage deduction) has shifted the nation's housing policy to benefit wealthier households. Today, over 60 percent of federal housing dollars go to people who make over \$55,000 a year, while only 20 percent goes to people who make less than \$18,000.

These trends have dramatically impacted Lexington. In 1990, 88 percent of all rental units in Lexington were affordable to low-wage workers, but by 2012, that number had dropped to just 17 percent. Each year, more than

400 rental units drop from affordability because of rising rents, lost subsidies, or gentrification. The mean hourly income of renter households in Lexington is \$11.44, while the affordability cost of a two-bedroom apartment in Lexington requires an income of \$15.33 an hour. In Lexington, 36 percent of renters pay more than 30 percent of their income for housing. Even more troubling, 18 percent pay more than 50 percent of their gross income for housing.

Lexingtonians are largely unaware of this affordable housing crisis because the city is generally segregated by income. "Most people do not interact with people who are different from themselves," David said. A study by the East End Development Corporation noted that the northeast section of downtown Lexington contains 46 percent of the city's blighted housing. A majority of this blighted property is owned by absentee landlords, with just three people owning 28 percent of Lexington's blighted properties.

David's suggestions for local solutions include:

- Increasing local awareness of our imbalanced housing market;
- Increasing investments in city-funded affordable housing;
- Increasing wages for low-wage families;
- Increasing publicly monitored protections for renters;
- Advocacy for a great commitment to building affordable housing in the federal budget.



## Addressing Youth Violence in Lexington

Kerby Neill, retired child psychologist and long-time CKCPJ member, thinks some teens in Lexington need a "peer-ectomy" in order to separate them from the influences that lead them to violence.

As part of *Voices 2016*, Kerby led a discussion of efforts of Safe Summer Lexington to reduce youth violence in Lexington.

Kerby said he was surprised to learn that statistics show violence is gender-specific, therefore efforts are most effective by focusing on males under age 30.

Focusing attention on an even smaller

circle, evidence suggests that kids who don't read well by third grade don't graduate from high school, and are incarcerated at a rate 50 percent higher than high school graduates, leading them into situations where violence might be prevalent. "Those statistics have driven me to volunteer at William Wells Brown [Elementary School]," Kerby said.

Volunteers at the school know that the community benefits from closing the achievement gap. Although there is much discussion about the achievement gap

## The Central Kentucky Council for Peace and Justice

*Board of Directors:* Rebecca Ballard DiLoreto, David Christiansen (co-chair), Rick Clewett, Bilal El-Amin, Mary Ann Ghosal (secretary), Heather Hadi, Randolph Hollingsworth, Rahul Karanth, Steven Lee Katz (treasurer), Richard Mitchell, Bruce Mundy, Steve Pavey, Nadia Rasheed, Rabbi Uri Smith, Teddi Smith-Robillard, 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.



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between racial groups, the gap is also present among children of different economic levels. Data collected at a juvenile detention center indicated that re-offenders often have low reading skills and no contact with their biological fathers.

When kids from low income families can't find status through the things they own, it is not uncommon for them to turn to gangs in order to develop a sense of belonging. Kerby drew a parallel between joining gangs and joining ISIS.

Kerby addressed the prevalence of guns in

youth culture, saying that many shoot-outs are drug related. "Drug dealers are vulnerable," he said. "They have to protect their stash: their money and their drugs."

A survey of low income middle-school and high-school students in 2000 determined that one of the biggest needs of youth was part time and summer jobs, which then increased. Today, however, there are few job or training opportunities according to the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

Real-life skills were also determined to be important. "Kids can't see how things they learn in school relate to real life. They can't relate Jane Eyre and algebra to work life."

Mentoring kids helps bring them real-life skills to replace such dead-end skills as hot-wiring cars and breaking into storage areas.

People representing the Newman Center/Holy Spirit Catholic Church, Lexington United, Moms Demand Action, the Catholic Action Center, as well as CKCPJ discussed actions that could be taken to reach out to at-risk youth to curb violence in Lexington.

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***Witness for Peace***

*by Rebecca Glasscock*

Has it been 52 years, or ten times that long? Officially, Colombia's civil war has been going on since the guerrilla group known as Revolutionary Armed Forces of Columbia (FARC) was founded in 1964. The war has claimed 220,000 lives and driven seven million from their homes. Over the years, gun buy-backs and other attempts to de-escalate violence occurred, yet killing continued. Finally, on Nov. 19, 2012, peace negotiations began in earnest. Held in Havana, negotiations concluded on Aug. 24 and the peace plan was signed on Sept. 26.

On Oct. 2, Colombians voted on whether to accept or reject the peace plan. The vote was close, but went down to defeat – 50.2 percent to 49.7 percent. Five days later, the Nobel committee announced that Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos was the 2016 recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize.

A few days later, on Oct. 13, Witness for Peace's southeast tour came to Lexington, as part of *Voices 2016*. Marcia Majia, an indigenous Nonam leader, had plenty to say about the Colombian peace process. From her perspective, the war actually started in 1499, the year the Spanish arrived in Colombia. The indigenous and poor of Colombia have been fighting for their lives and their land ever since.

Leading up to the plebiscite on Oct. 2, a good bit of disinformation was floated. Former President Alvaro Uribe led a "NO" campaign, focused on his assertion that criminal FARC members would be granted amnesty under the peace plan. In reality the peace plan called for restorative justice, not impunity.

On the day of the vote, Marcia was stopped on her way to her polling place by paramilitary and asked how she would vote. She managed to continue to the poll by saying she would vote no. So, clearly, her lack of confidence in the legitimacy of the vote tally is understandable.

When she spoke at UK's Marksby Building, Marcia was adamant that the

work for peace must continue. Even if the peace plan had been approved, just ending the armed conflict would not be enough. Inequality must be addressed in the country. Colombians, no matter their status, must have a right to land, to health, to education, to employment, and to decent housing. With her nine-year-old son sitting behind her, she pled with her audience to grasp the importance of stopping the killing before more of these beautiful children are taken. The audience, primarily students, appeared to be stunned when Marcia, after asking for the world to care about the children of Colombia, began sobbing.

When she was able to continue, she asked the audience to write political leaders and request that the proposed \$450 million aid package called "Peace Colombia" not be funded. She said it is nothing of the sort, and like Plan Colombia, is focused to a large extent on militarized security.

In the days since her moving presentation, the opponents of the peace plan have been brought into the peace process. Working with the proponents, substantive changes to the peace plan have been negotiated, with FARC giving ground on several key points. After just 41 days of negotiations, a revised peace plan was published on Nov. 14, and it will now go to Colombia's legislature.

Colombia seems to be exemplifying Thomas Carlyle's words: "Permanence, perseverance and persistence in spite of all obstacles, discouragements, and impossibilities: It is this, that in all things distinguishes the strong soul from the weak."

If you are interested in following the peace process in Colombia, go to [colombiapeace.org/2016/11/15/key-changes-to-the-new-peace-accord](http://colombiapeace.org/2016/11/15/key-changes-to-the-new-peace-accord).

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*Rebecca is a professor at BCTC.*

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***Submissions to Peaceways***

Articles submitted for publication in *Peaceways* should show an awareness of and sensitivity to the CKCPJ's mission and concerns.

Articles of varying lengths are encouraged. Short 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. Please query submissions to [peacewayseditor@gmail.com](mailto:peacewayseditor@gmail.com) before writing a 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. We do not publish in January.

# 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.*

**Fri., Dec. 9**

**League of Women Voters**, Deadline for student essay contest. The LWV is presenting young writers with this topic: The 2016 presidential election campaign was brutally divisive. With all of the noise it has been difficult to discern truth. The LWV is asking young voters or potential voters, to tell their stories as citizens who have experienced the 2016 campaign. Examples of questions to answer in essay form (although other questions can be addressed) are: Which candidate did you find compelling and why? What standards did you use to judge candidate competency to fulfill the office of president, if elected? What sources of information did you rely upon and how did they shape your thinking? What lessons for the future did you learn? Information has been distributed to the schools for submitting essays. For submission information see [lwvlexington.com](http://lwvlexington.com)

**Mon., Dec. 12**

**CKCPJ steering committee meeting**, 7 p.m. Quaker Meeting House, 649 Price Ave., Lexington. Discussion will include planning for the upcoming committee meetings, proposals for new initiatives, continuing action and discussion following the recent national and state elections and planning for the annual meeting.

**Mon., Dec. 12**

**Human Rights Day**, 7 p.m. Kentucky Theatre, 214 E. Main St., Lexington. *The True Cost*. A documentary about the clothes we wear, the people who make them and the impact the industry is having on the world.

**Tues., Dec. 13**

**CKCPJ Peace Action Council**, 7 p.m., Quaker Meeting House, 649 Price Ave., Lexington. Discussion topics will include non-violence training, sale of decorative peace plates, and other peace-related topics.

**For the dates of the TBD meetings, see [peaceandjustice.org](http://peaceandjustice.org) after Jan. 1.**

**Wed., Dec. 14**

**Housing Justice**, 7 p.m. Quaker Meeting House, 649 Price Ave., Lexington. The Lexington Working Families Campaign has merged with the Housing Justice Group. Discussion at this meeting will include topics that are relevant to both constituencies

**Jan. meeting TBD**

**Housing Justice**, 7 p.m. Quaker Meeting House, 649 Price Ave., Lexington. Discussion will include Rick Clewett's report on his meeting with Mayor Jim Gray and six others concerning affordable housing

**Tues., Jan. 10**

**PFLAG**, 6:30-8:30 p.m., St. Michael Episcopal Church, 2025 Bellefonte Drive, Lexington. Lance Poston will present information about the programs and progress being made at the University of Kentucky and at UK Healthcare with regard to LGBTQ needs.

Presentation and questions and answers take place the first hour, followed by our confidential support group meeting. No meeting in December.

**Mon., Jan. 16**

**CKCPJ steering committee meeting**, 7 p.m. Quaker Meeting House, 649 Price Ave., Lexington. Discussion will include planning the annual meeting, as well as updates on committee activities.

**Mon., Jan. 16**

**One World Film Festival**, 2:30 p.m., Kentucky Theatre, 214 East Main Street, Lexington. *Race*, the 2016 biographical sports drama film about African American athlete Jesse Owens, who won a record-breaking four gold medals at the 1936 Berlin Olympic Games. The film is 134 minutes in length and, as true for all One World Films, is free and open to the public. The screening is part of Lexington's observance of Martin Luther King Day.

**Jan. meeting TBD**

**CKCPJ Peace Action Council**, 7 p.m., Quaker Meeting House, 649 Price Ave., Lexington. Discussion topics will include non-violence training, sale of decorative peace plates, and other peace-related topics.

**Sun., April 2 (TBD)**

**CKCPJ Annual Dinner and Networking Fair**, Hunter Presbyterian Church, 109 Rosemont Garden, Lexington. In addition to the annual networking fair, the 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 notice of February events by Jan. 10, 2017. We do not publish in January.*

**Are you interested in becoming more involved with Central Kentucky Council for Peace and Justice?**

Find out how that interest can be fulfilled in the New Year by attending a CKCPJ committee meeting in January.

Any and all meetings are open to all.

If you're not sure about which committee, or aren't sure about the time you can commit, feel free to come and listen.

Quaker Meeting House,  
649 Price Avenue, Lexington.

# One World Film Festival sets schedule

In recognition of Lexington's observance of the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. holiday on Mon., Jan. 16, One World Films will show the film *Race*, at 2:30 p.m. at the Kentucky Theater, 214 E. Main St., Lexington.

The film is the 2016 biographical film about African American Jesse Owens, who won a record-breaking four gold medals at the 1936 Berlin Olympic Games. As a One World Films presentation it is free and open to the public.

One World Films opens its 2017 film festival series on Sun., Feb. 5, at 2 p.m. in UK Chandler Medical Center Auditorium with the film *Concussion*, starring Will Smith as forensic neuropathologist Dr. Bennet Omalu. Omalu, an African-American immigrant, made the first discovery of chronic traumatic encephalopathy, a football-related brain injury, in a former pro player and fought for the truth to be known. Omalu's quest put him at odds with one of the most powerful institutions in the world, the National Football League. Parking is available in the Medical Center Parking Garage across from the building and is free.

The remaining 10 films in the 2017 series, all at the Kentucky Theater, are:

- **Where to Invade Next**  
Thursday, Feb. 9, 7 p.m.
- **Learning to Drive**  
Saturday, Feb. 11, 10 a.m.
- **After the Storm**  
Thursday, Feb. 16, 7 p.m.
- **The Hunting Ground**  
Saturday, Feb. 18, 10 a.m.
- **Rosenwald**  
Thursday, Feb. 23, 7 p.m.
- **After Coal**  
Saturday, Feb. 25, 10 a.m.
- **Journey Into Europe**  
Thursday, March 2, 7 p.m.
- **Diplomat**  
Saturday, March 4, 10 a.m.
- **Dough**  
Thursday, March 9, 7 p.m.
- **The Danish Girl**  
Saturday, March 11, 10 a.m.

For more information about the festival, see [lexfilm.org](http://lexfilm.org).

## MONTHLY MEETINGS

**CKCPJ Steering Committee Meetings**, third Monday, 7 p.m. More info: (859) 488-1448 or [peaceandjusticeky@gmail.com](mailto:peaceandjusticeky@gmail.com). All are welcome.

**Interfaith Prayer Vigil for Peace**, every Thursday, 5:30 - 6 p.m. 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. Visit [info@pflagcentralky.org](http://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., Pride Center, 389 Waller Ave., Lexington. GLSO operates Kentucky's only Pride Center, where they have quietly provided services to the GLBTQQIA community for decades. More info, Pride Center hours. 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. Child care 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 Fourth 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, the program 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 Clays 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).

# Alert! Alert! Alert!

by Ginny Ramsey

Lexington recently learned that over 1,000 Fayette County Public School kids are homeless. The silver lining to this distressing news is that if 25 percent of the households in Fayette County will donate \$25, the community can house these children and their families for the winter and get them in stabilized housing.

*Give Kids a Home* is a simple community response initiated and sponsored by The Stein Group, Community Action Council, Catholic Action Center and Babbage CoFounder with Fayette County Public Schools. By making a donation to give Kids a Home by Dec. 15, these homeless kids will have a home for the winter.

On Nov. 1, 28 leaders of faith and community groups participated in a 24-Hour Homeless Experience. The experience gave them a unique understanding of homelessness, which they shared with the community. See their reflections on the Give Kids A Home Facebook Page.

How *Give Kids A Home* (GKAH) will work:

- Fayette County Public Schools Family Resource Centers will refer the students and their families who are without housing to the Community Action Council Family Emergency Housing Program. This program was established in February 2016 and is full with a waiting list. The FCPS families will be served by the funds raised by the community.

- GKAH will fill in the gap for the CAC Family Emergency Housing Program and will allow FCPS students and their families, who may not meet all the government qualifications for the CAC Family Emergency Housing Program, to be housed. The qualifications for the GKAH program are that one of the children attends FCPS and they are without housing. Income, background, and residency are not factors. Willingness to work with the program, case managers, the Family Resource Center, and Trained Community Mentors is a requirement for the GKAH families.

- FCPS families will begin to be housed Dec. 1. Each family will have up to 90 days' housing in a fully furnished apartment to work through the barriers that have created their homelessness. The case managers, Family Resource Center, and mentors will provide care, accountability and connections for each

family situation. Some will need less than three months to be stabilized; many situations are temporary for families, but homelessness for these children is NOT acceptable in our community.

- The number of FCPS families that can be served by this program will be limited by the funds raised. The cost per month per family is \$700. The program is asking the community to make this happen for as many of the thousand-plus children in FCPS are experiencing homelessness.

How to help:

Send a \$25 check (or more) to: *Give Kids A Home*, P.O. Box 324 Lexington, KY 40588, or go to website [www.givekidsahome.com](http://www.givekidsahome.com) for more information about donating online. All donations will go to Community Action Council Give Kids a Home Fund and are tax deductible.

Act now! We can raise the money needed to take care of children in our community. For more information call (859) 514-7210 or email [givekidsahome@gmail.com](mailto:givekidsahome@gmail.com).

Ginny is the co-director of Lexington's Catholic Action Center.

## World Kindness Day 2016

Rowan McWilliams

On Monday, Nov. 14, I was given the opportunity to take part in Bluegrass Community and Technical College's International Day (in celebration of World Kindness Day) that allowed the students at the community college to come and share their cultures and traditions with others. It was amazing to see the excitement and love among so many people. Honestly, after being at BCTC for a year and a half I have never seen so much love and kindness within a room of strangers sharing their cultures. There was food, books, henna tattoos, music, and so much more that allowed the international students to share their lives with one another and with me. Smiling faces were everywhere as they embraced their cultures and welcomed those who approached their booths to become like them in a split second. I am grateful to have been able to take part in this service project because it truly opened my eyes to the incredible diversity that BCTC has to offer thousands of students. Being a part of it increases my gratitude for the decision to come to this college and have the opportunity to share these two years with men and women who have extremely different backgrounds, but such amazing stories.

I was asked to sit at the booth that advertised the art gallery and the book that had recently been released about BCTC's international students (*Slowly Is the Journey*). As I sat there I looked out over the room and saw students who could not be happier to share food and fellowship. It seemed like true peace. It was not quiet in any way, but there was a buzz throughout the room that gave me a new understanding

of peace, one that I had never experienced before. Peace does not mean sitting in silence in order to process. What I learned was a peace that meant reaching a point of unity and contentment. There were all kinds of different races and cultures joined together in a room. All I could do was smile at the fact that so many people were unified.

Our country has undergone a lot of trials and hardships. So have other countries. I think there was a dismissal of all those things that could potentially cause disputes, disunity and lack of love. It was replaced with peace as every man and woman fought to understand one another. I witnessed laughter, joy and gratitude with people I had never met. It truly was an extraordinary day, and I am thankful to have taken part. It has given me a completely new perspective on what the world could be if everyone, every day decided to think about kindness and others the way we did on International Day of World Kindness.

Rowan is a BCTC student.

Gun Violence In America as of 11-23-16 (excluding suicide)	
<b>2015</b>	
Killed	13,293
Wounded	26,826
<b>2016</b>	
Killed	13,218
Wounded	27,241

Source: [www.gunviolencearchive.org](http://www.gunviolencearchive.org)

# PEACEWAYS



The Central Kentucky Council  
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*“Peace cannot be kept by force;  
it can only be achieved  
by understanding.”*

*— Albert Einstein*

## *Affordable Housing? Yes!*

*by Rick Clewett*

As a recent *Herald-Leader* editorial states, the Lexington Office of Affordable Housing, under Rick McQuady, has made a good start in the first two years of its existence. But we should not be lulled into complacency or become satisfied with the rate at which we are making progress.

Enabling the building and rehabbing of 400 or 500 housing units a year is a good use of public funds. But it has to be noted that continued progress at that rate will not get us where we need to be.

That 400 or 500 units a year is about the number of affordable housing units we are losing a year, according to a CZB Consultancy study commissioned by the city in 2014.

Our basic shortage is much larger: Roughly 15,000 low income households need housing in Lexington. Of them, about 9,000 now receive assistance or are accommodated by the private market. This leaves about 6,000 households, most of which include at least one worker, unable to find decent housing on the open market in Lexington at rates considered affordable. Consequently, these 6,000 working households either overpay or live in substandard conditions. This is the magnitude of our affordable housing gap.

Wages (for less skilled workers, at least) have not nearly kept up with rising housing costs. In Lexington, in 1990, according to the CZB study, 88 percent of all apartments and rental units were affordable for people

making the then-minimum wage without spending more than 30 percent of their income, but in 2010 only 17 percent of minimum wage earners could find housing for 30 percent of their income, the federal standard of affordability.

The city's current draft five-year Consolidated Plan defines the effects of our affordable housing shortage in even starker terms: *Approximately 18,000 households are severely cost-burdened, meaning they pay greater than 50 percent of their income for housing, and most of these households are at or below 30 percent of area median income.*

However worthwhile and effective the programs funded with this HUD money are, they are too small in relation to the size of our affordable housing problem.

Moreover, according to an Aug. 29 *Herald-Leader* piece, the population of Lexington is expected to grow by more than 81,000 over the next 20 years, or 26 percent. That population increase will put additional pressure on area housing prices.

The Mozaic Community Planning Study “2016-2021: Analysis of impediments to Fair Housing Choice,” commissioned by the city to meet a requirement of its HUD Community Development Block Grant application, was released last month. The study calls for the city, in collaboration with the private and non-profit sectors, to develop “a long-term strategy that

would serve as an ongoing affordable housing vision and that would set measurable short- and long-term goals for housing production, preservation, and continued affordability. It also concludes that the city needs to spend more of its own money on affordable housing. This is all the more important since federal HUD funds have been decreasing over recent decades.

Yes, addressing our affordable housing gap will cost a considerable amount of money, but failing to do so will cost much more in both monetary and human terms.

Let's dedicate ourselves to building aggressively on the progress we have begun to make in the last three years. If we fail to do so, we will be faced with a worsening affordable housing crisis that will create increased homelessness, cause many people to suffer unnecessarily, and produce an avoidable drag on social services and the city's economy.

Of course, we must not starve other social service programs to feed this one. It is both the moral and the monetarily prudent path to help all of our neighbors build productive, satisfying lives. Affordable housing must be a central part of this effort, coupled with continued work on health, education, and human rights.

*Rick chairs the CKCPJ Housing Justice Project. This column is reprinted with permission from the Lexington Herald-Leader.*