



Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America



2013 ANNUAL REPORT



Programming

SUMMER CONFERENCE

From July 15-20, 2013, the BPFNA held its annual Summer Conference (aka Peace Camp) in Spokane, Washington on the campus of Gonzaga University. This was the most diverse and vibrant summer conference in our history; with participants coming from across North America including pastors from Cuba and Puerto Rico, activists from Mexico, students of all ages (from elementary school to PhD programs), young pastors and ministers from many places, and families from throughout the US and Canada.



"This event consistently is the highlight of my year. I know I will be challenged, inspired... and that I'll be filled. More even than in my faith community, I feel 'not crazy,' or at least among other people whose [walk] with Jesus leaves us marginalized as 'crazies' by the dominant [Christian] culture."

-Gwenyth Lewis, 2013 Peace Camp Participant



"I learned about the conference from a board member, Katy Friggle-Norton. Based on what she shared with me about past conferences, it seemed interesting so I decided to take a chance. I was not disappointed. The people were warm and genuine and the topics were thought-provoking."

-Neomsha Nelson, 2013 Peace Camp Participant

"Peace Camp helped me find a sense of community and renewed identification with my Baptist identity."

-Michael Woolf, 2013 Peace Camp Participant

We more than doubled the number of young adults in our Companionship Program.

COMPANIONING PROGRAM

In this program created by the young adults themselves, younger peacemakers commit to a year of regular conversation with a more experienced peacemaker.

"Coming to Peace Camp was like coming home to a family I had never met. I know that without the Companion Grant, I would not have been able to attend Peace Camp. I am so very grateful for the kindness afforded me by the BPFNA... I believe that this is only the beginning of my participation with and dedication to the BPFNA. It is an organization with beauty, peace, and justice as its banner. For this experience of Peace Camp, I am a joyful girl."

-Kate Fields, Companionship Program Participant

"Being able to travel to "Peace Camp" is a gift I would not otherwise have been able to afford if not for the Companionship Program. The network of young Baptist peacemakers I joined in Spokane is a new network of colleagues I cannot fathom having developed anywhere else. In addition, my budding relationship with my experienced peacemaker companion is already providing me with rich conversation and personal support in my own peace and justice work."

-Cody J. Sanders, BPFNA Board Member & Companionship Program Participant

"I am very thankful to have been a part of BPFNA's summer conference. It was the first time in years I have been able to find a community of people my age who share my kind of faith and who are seeking to live out that faith, each in their own way. Throughout the conference I experienced authentic connections with others and to the divine. I was encouraged and energized by these connections... I am thankful for the space created at the conference that allowed me to have these experiences."

-Rachel Iverson, Companionship Program Participant



Looking ahead...

Join us in 2014 as we head to beautiful **St. Catharines, Ontario** from **July 14-19, 2014** on the campus of **Brock University**.

One Creation / Une Seule Création/ Una Sola Creación
A Peace Camp with a theme of climate care, environmental justice, and making peace with the Earth.

Find out more...
www.bpfna.org/gather/summer-conference
704-521-6051

SUMMER CONFERENCE

It's a Peace Camp wedding!

This year at Summer Conference, we celebrated our first-ever Peace Camp wedding! Long time BPFNA members April Baker and Deborah Lynn were married on Friday, July 19, 2013 at our Peace Camp in Spokane, WA. After 25 years together, April and Deborah are now LEGALLY MARRIED!



Programming

CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION TRAININGS

In 2013, the BPFNA offered Conflict Transformation trainings in a wide variety of forms – from a **one-hour version** for the youth group of our host church, to an **afternoon version** for an American Baptist Region, to a **full-day version** at the American Baptist Mission Summit, and a **two-week** training of trainers for North Americans.

TRANSFORM ME, TRANSFORM YOU, TRANSFORM THE WORLD

Led by Lee McKenna and Evelyn Hanneman, participants developed skills in conflict transformation and nonviolence, the Bible and peacemaking, economic and media literacy, gender and violence, workshop design, and nonviolent communication.

These participants are now qualified to lead trainings in their own contexts throughout North America.

"I found this to be the best training on this subject that I have ever attended... Your subject was very well organized and it stayed on topic with relevant illustrations and stories that brought home the points. You also had a nice mix of small group activities vs. "sitting in the chair time"... All clergy could benefit from these insights and practical applications "

-Angie Henrichon, Conflict Transformation Training Participant

Looking ahead...

In 2014 we will be leading a Conflict Transformation Training for the residents & staff of Deborah's House, a domestic violence shelter in Tijuana, Mexico.

In 2013 we created our first-ever North American Conflict Transformation Training of Trainers.

"I have no doubt that I leave here a changed person and that this training will be a part of me and be used for the rest of my life."

-Conflict Transformation Training Participant

"Thank you for an experience that lived up to the training's promises of personal transformation and the gaining of skills for world transformation."

-Conflict Transformation Training Participant

"I learned so much about myself (and others) through the many exercises – which weren't just information or tools to learn for the future but experiences I will treasure for what they gave to me and created in me."

-Conflict Transformation Training Participant



Looking ahead...

It's your turn to be transformed in 2014! Join us for our 2nd annual North American Conflict Transformation Training of Trainers.

May 19-31, 2014
Asheville, NC
Lutheridge Conference Center

Find out more...
www.bpfna.org/mobilize/tmtytw

OTHER TRAININGS

In 2013 we presented *Peacemaking in a Red State/Blue State Nation* – a training to help church members have faithful conversations across lines of difference.

FRIENDSHIP TOURS

A Front-Line Peace Witness

In partnership with Quaker House (an organization in Fayetteville, NC that offers counseling and support to soldiers and their families) this Friendship Tour focused on the challenges faced by members of the military and their families and how peace-focused churches can respond.

Participants visited Quaker House and Ft. Bragg Military Base.



“Violence is the very foundation of the military today, impacting not only the soldiers but also their families, communities and the entire society.”

-Evelyn Hanneman
BPFNA Operations Coordinator



200th Anniversary Celebration of Baptists in Burma/Myanmar

In December 2013, BPFNA members met with Baptists from all over the world as they traveled to Burma to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the arrival of Adoniram and Ann Judson as Baptist missionaries. More than 40,000 people gathered in Yangon to celebrate this historic event.

“44,000 Baptists from across Myanmar and around the world gathered to celebrate the ministry of Adoniram and Ann Judson, the first Baptist missionaries in the country. Ethnic groups dressed in their finest to hear preachers, attend bible study, and sing the great hymns of the church. For several years the Myanmar Baptist Convention worked to build structures to house the celebration, developed plans for feeding and housing those attending, and can be proud of the results.”

-Evelyn Hanneman
BPFNA Operations Coordinator



Partnerships

The BPFNA engaged in conversation and shared work with a wide variety of partners this year including:

Alliance of Baptists • Alliance of Baptists of Brazil • American Baptist Churches-USA • Asia Pacific Baptist Federation/Aid • Association of Welcoming and Affirming Baptists • Canadian Association for Baptist Freedoms • Convention of Philippine Baptist Churches • Cooperative Baptist Fellowship • Council of Baptist Churches of Northeast India • Equal Exchange • Evangelical Baptist Church of Georgia • Fellowship of Reconciliation • Fraternity of Cuban Baptist Churches • The Gathering of Baptists (Ontario) • GI Rights Network • Hispanic Summer Program • Jitokeze Wamama Wafrika • Massachusetts Baptist Multicultural Ministries • Mayan Intercultural Seminary • Partera • Quaker House • The Soul Repair Center

The BPFNA also visited churches in:

CANADA Vancouver, BC **MEXICO** Mexico City **UNITED STATES** Moorestown, NJ • Princeton, NJ • Providence, RI • Greenville, SC • Dallas, TX • Waco, TX • Seattle, WA • Burien, WA • Spokane, WA

In addition, the BPFNA was represented at the following:

Alliance of Baptists Annual Convocation in Greenville, SC • American Baptist Churches USA Mission Summit in Overland Park, KS • Cooperative Baptist Fellowship Annual Gathering in Greensboro, NC • Institute for Multicultural Ministry at Princeton Theological Seminary • Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference in Dallas, TX

NORTH AMERICAN PARTNERSHIPS

Conferences & Events

In 2013, the BPFNA:

- Continued our commitment to the **Baptist Fair Trade Project**, educating Baptists about the purposes and promises of Fair Trade as well as providing delicious and healthy coffee, tea, chocolate, and snacks.
- Furthered our support of the **Youth Ambassadors for Peace** program involving international students in the Chicago metro area.
- Gathered with other peace-oriented church leaders, practitioners, scholars, activists, and pastors from across the US (and representing a broad range of Christian traditions) for a **Peace Circle Conference** to see how we can work together to spread the good news of peace.
- Spent a week with our friends and partners at the **Baptist Seminary of Mexico in Mexico City**; strengthening existing relationships, creating new ones, and making concrete plans for shared work.
- Sponsored **peace breakfasts** at the national gatherings of the American Baptist Churches-USA and the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

"We are encouraged by a shared commitment to Jesus' way of peacemaking... We believe our congregations share a sacred role in being strategic centers that nurture a culture of peace."

-Statement from the Peace Circles conference

Looking ahead...

In 2014 we will participate in the **Afro-Indigenous-Latin American and Caribbean Peace Conference** hosted in San Cristóbal de las Casas, Chiapas, Mexico by the Mayan Intercultural Seminary (SIM).



Courses

- Offered a course entitled *The Gospels and Peace* at the Mayan Intercultural Seminary (SIM) in Chiapas, Mexico and made plans to offer a third course in 2014 and bring a SIM staff member to teach in the U.S.

"Thanks for being with us, for walking with us, for supporting us and for sharing the dreams and hopes of the Mayan community for the *Lekil Kuxlejal*. We at SIM and from our little space will continue our struggle to reach the peace that Jesus dreamt for the world. Thanks for sharing your deepest love and dreams for Peace with us."

- Rev. Dr. Doris García Mayol, Co-founder
Mayan Intercultural Seminary

Looking ahead...

In 2014 we will offer our second peace-themed class as part of the annual Hispanic Summer Program. Our representative will be the Rev. Dr. Doris García Mayol.

Outreach

- Supported a team of BPFNA members participating in a vigil to demand the closing of the **Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation (WHINSEC)**, formerly known as the **School of the Americas (SOA)**. WHINSEC/SOA is a U.S. taxpayer-funded military training facility that first made headlines in 1996 when the Pentagon released training manuals used at the school that advocated torture, extortion, & execution.

INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

- Funded the **3rd Christian-Muslim Interfaith Forum** in Abbottabad, Pakistan which was attended by over 300 young women of both faiths. **(Funded by the Gavel Memorial World Peace Fund)**
- Sent **theological books to seminaries** in Sierra Leone. **(Funded by the Gavel Memorial World Peace Fund)**
- Set aside funds for **Archbishop Malkhaz Songulashvili of the Evangelical Baptist Church of the Republic of Georgia to visit Christians in Syria**. Given the ongoing fighting and deteriorating conditions, he has not been able to make the trip yet.
- Worked with the **Council of Baptist Churches of Northeast India** to offer a Conflict Transformation and Mediation training with five warring tribal groups. **(Funded by the Gavel Memorial World Peace Fund)**

"BPFNA is a cause and organization I'm proud to be part of!"

—*Maria Mayer*
BPFNA member



“In our [Pakastani] national flag, we have two colors; green and white. The white part represents minorities of country. In our country we have a number of Hindus and Christians with whom we need to live like our own brothers and sisters.”



“My name is Zainab and I am student of Government Girls Comprehensive School. I learned a lot through this interfaith seminar. I learned that merely getting education is not enough but to understand our surroundings through our knowledge. Brotherhood doesn't mean that we love our Muslims alone and ignore our minority. They are human beings and need our love and care. Especially I am able to understand through this seminar that all faiths are true and particularly Christians are believing friends and human beings and we need to live in harmony.”

—*Zainab Sikandar, student*
Government Girls Comprehensive School
Abbottabad, Pakistan

“In our [Pakastani] national flag, we have two colors; green and white. The white part represents minorities of country. In our country we have a number of Hindus and Christians, with whom we need to live like our own brothers and sisters. I learned a lot about the Christian point of view through Christian speakers. Similarly, I learned a number of things from Rev. Riaz and especially I am surprised to know that, beside your Christian religion you study our Qur'an, so we need to study the Bible as well.

—*Zainab Dawar, student*
Government Girls High School
Abbottabad, Pakistan

Resources & Publications

RESOURCES

- Continued resourcing BPFNA Partner Congregations through **Model Ministries**, a quarterly e-newsletter sharing news of peace and justice work being carried out in churches.
- Created a **flyer** for BPFNA churches to share when they participate in **local Pride events**.
- Created an **annotated guide to Spanish peace and justice resources**.
- Created **What Your Church Can Do About Climate Change**.
- Made available a wide array of **justice-focused worship resources** for the annual **BPFNA Peace Sunday**.
- Shared **Living Without the Sword: A Statement on Gun Violence** with the governments of our four nations and throughout our network.

PUBLICATIONS

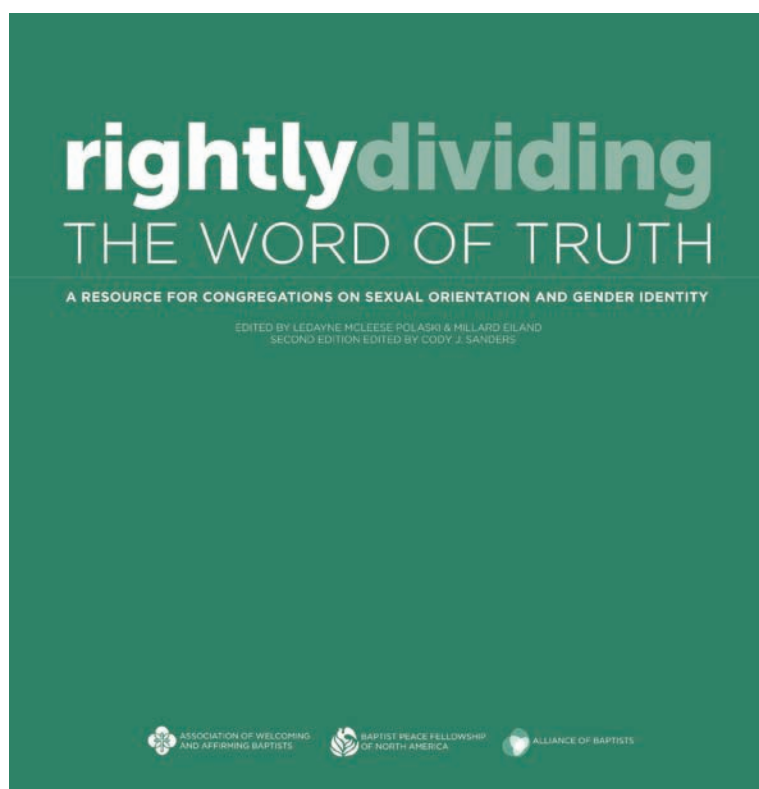
- Published the last remaining issues of **PeacePoint**, a publication sent to non-members, as set by the parameters of the grant used to fund this project.
- Published a greatly-expanded edition of **Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth: A Resource for Congregations on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity** in partnership with the Alliance of Baptists and the Association of Welcoming and Affirming Baptists.
- Published four new issues of **Baptist Peacemaker** and have begun plans to “go green” by sharing this ever-popular resource electronically.
- Won **two Associated Church Press awards** for **Baptist Peacemaker** articles.

Looking ahead...

Be on the lookout in 2014 for our next issue monograph in this series titled **What Your Church Can Do About Human Trafficking**.

“I really appreciate your responsiveness on behalf of BPFNA to create a flyer that I could use at our Pride (and future) events that help put a few words on paper that we can give to people we meet that can open their minds on God's acceptance of LGBT Christians. I came to you just a short while ago, asking if this could be a possibility because I believe it would serve as a good promotional piece also for the recently re-released Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth (a resource I find invaluable). My hope was to have something I could use for DC Pride on June 8. To my great pleasure, not only have you figured out how to respond to my request, but you have delivered a well-done flyer three weeks in advance! God bless you for seeing to my request, and I am sure this small piece of literature will touch people's lives in many unforeseen ways as we make use of it.”

— **Dave Farmer, member
Ravensworth Baptist Church**



“We believe in what you are doing to make our community and our world a better place for all of God’s people.”

— **Park Road Baptist Church, North Carolina
BPFNA Partner Congregation**



“You are an inspiration! I really love you guys and your publication. Thank you for being there and giving me such spiritual nourishment.”

— **Sally Wagner
BPFNA Member**

“I appreciate all the ways BPFNA has enriched my life.”

— **Rachel McGuire
BPFNA Member**

Other Accomplishments

OTHER 2013 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Continued the **PeaceBuilders: Those Who Teach, Inspire and Challenge** campaign through which our members honor those who shaped their call and commitment to peace. Read the inspiring stories at www.bpfna.org/honorees.
- Gave our members **a forum through which to share thoughts, questions, and resources** on issues such as the threatened war against Syria and Trayvon Martin verdict.
- Offered a paper titled ***A Quality of Relationship: A Theology of Transforming Conflict*** at the Symposium on Theology and Society held at Furman University.
- Welcomed **six new members** to our Board of Directors.



In 2013 the BPFNA was chosen as a “Top Rated Nonprofit” by GreatNonProfits.org

“The BPFNA makes me proud to be a Baptist. The organization connects me with folk around the world who are living out Jesus’ call to be peacemakers, and encourages me in my own peacemaking efforts.”

-BPFNA Review
GreatNonProfits.org

“The vision of peacemaking from our Baptist tradition and the practical matters of peacemaking encourage and challenge us. To work for peace with justice is both hard and joyful... Often churches do not support those who give this priority. BPFNA equips us to spread a culture of peace.”

-BPFNA Review
GreatNonProfits.org



“Thank you for being an oasis in the midst of the desert more times than you know”

— BPFNA Review
Partner Congregation Pastor

“Fifteen years ago, when I came out as transgender, I never dreamed I would ever have a place in Baptist life again... Then I heard about the Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America. Longing for Christian companionship, I drove three days each way to attend Peace Camp in Spokane, Washington. It was one of the best weeks of my life. Not only did I find acceptance, I found home. This organization is a powerful witness for peace and reconciliation and stands as a beacon of hope, life and love to LGBT people searching for Christian community... I am delighted and grateful to God that I found BPFNA, and I look forward to future Peace Camps. I cannot commend it to others highly enough.”

-BPFNA Review
GreatNonProfits.org

Looking ahead...

The BPFNA turns 30 in 2014!

2014 also marks the completion of a **new five-year strategic plan** that will guide us as we begin our next 30 years of working for peace rooted in justice.



Baptist Peace Fellowship
of North America

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The Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America gathers, equips and mobilizes Baptists to build a culture of peace rooted in justice. We labour with a wonderful array of peacemakers to change the world.