

2019

BPFNA-Bautistas
por la Paz
Annual Report

Witnessing to
God's peace
rooted in justice,
working together
until it comes.

2020



Annual Theme

Beyond Barriers: Soaring in the Spirit



In challenging times,
we stand with peacemakers.
Our mission,
“Witnessing to God’s peace
rooted in justice;
working together until it comes,”
thrusts us beyond barriers,
to belong and nurture the Beloved
Community,
to be more like Jesus.

Soaring with the Spirit’s impulse!

BPFNA-Bautistas por la Paz is the largest Baptist network of peacemakers in the US, inclusive of other denominational faiths and non-confessional groups and individuals. We serve about 6,000 peacemakers and more than 1,400 members from and within the dominant consciousness, empathic communities and marginal and discriminated groups (People of Color: Hispanics, African American, undocumented migrants, Indigenous groups and gender minorities) in four member nations—Canada, the US, Mexico & Puerto Rico.

From the Staff

A Message from the Interim Director

We can't deny that the past two years have been difficult. And yet, here we are in 2021—Present, Alive, Working, Changing, Dreaming. We are also bruised, pained and surprised with situations that hurt our hearts, our families and our national expectations.

We in the US, especially, are reeling from the thousands of deaths from COVID-19, the January 6 attack on the US Capitol, the deadly attacks on brothers and sisters of color. These past two years showed the resilience of our organization, as well as our obstinate and passionate will for peace. As Jesus did, we defiantly set our hearts to face the challenges that 2021 brings, embracing friends old and new.

This 2019-2020 Annual Report highlights the work of BPFNA ~ *Bautistas por la Paz* in the past two years amidst a changing world ravaged by the coronavirus epidemic. We have moved from one geographical place in Cali, Colombia, where we co-sponsored the Global Baptist Peace Conference, to our first Virtual Conference, which covered ten countries. But, more importantly, we continue moving beyond these barriers.

We praise God for the generous gift of \$100,000 to the Gavel Memorial Peace Fund and \$50,000 for BPFNA operations by Palo Alto Baptist Church (a founding church of the BPFNA), guided by pastor Rick Mixon.



And we praise God for the graceful matching of this gift by a truly extraordinary anonymous donor. You can read about this amazing story in the Summer 2021 issue of *Baptist Peacemaker*, Volume 41 No 3.

You will see in the annual theme, “Beyond Barriers: Soaring in the Spirit,” the integration of our hope for peace in our programming and work as we welcome more online events and develop our webpage with new resources for peacemakers. The Young Peacemakers focus will create a nurturing space for parents, churches and groups seeking resources and activities that will foster awareness of peace and justice issues in our children.

In 2021 we have once again taken up the transitioning plan that was delayed by the pandemic and financial constraints. After careful consideration of the context of the nonprofit sector, with its opportunities and threats, and of BPFNA's history, strengths and weaknesses, we defined strategies articulating two overarching goals:

1. BPFNA ~ *Bautistas por la Paz* will become financially sustainable by 2025 (Financial).
2. BPFNA ~ *Bautistas por la Paz* will become an actively antiracist, intercultural and decentralized organization (Identity).

Far reaching as they are, these goals will guide our work for the next couple of years and set the path for the future. We invite you to peruse the strategic focuses and become our partners in changing the world.

Under the heading “Equipping and Mobilizing” see what we have accomplished even when we were financially affected by the pandemic. Our financial reports are a testimony to our commitment to peace and resilience.

As Interim Executive Director, it has been a difficult but incredible journey to be part of BPFNA in these times. The Board of Directors is a group of committed, essential and talented companions in this path to gather, equip and mobilize peacemakers.

So, seeing what we have accomplished, I continue to give thanks to God for each of you, for your support and your trust. Thank you, peacemakers, for moving Beyond Barriers. Thank you for your willingness to respond to the divine call.

With joy and hope!
Rev. Dr. Doris García Rivera

From the Board

A Message from the BPFNA Board

Our Interim Director, Dr. Doris García Rivera, has shared our organization's goals: to become financially sustainable and to continue our witness of peace and justice by becoming an antiracist, intercultural and decentralized organization. So, how are we doing?

Assessing our financial health has been a difficult assignment for two reasons. First, we realized that we did not have accurate figures being recorded by our personnel. So we remedied that situation. Only then did we find that our contracted financial person was not able to fulfill the responsibilities we had contracted. So, once again, we made changes internally so that we can be in control of recording and publishing our financial reports, as was customary of our past reporting.

Recently, we invited Evelyn Hanneman to assist Kristen Pajkowski with adding financial tasks to her job description. Kristen is currently working 30 hours per week. Pending her progress, we plan to increase her workload to full time, managing the office, database and financial responsibilities.

Other productive changes that have been made since our last annual report include moving our member data

into a new database system that is efficient and capable of pulling informational lists as needed. We changed financial institutions to wire and manage money transfers across nations as needed. We saved administrative costs by using Zoom for staff and board meetings with simultaneous translation capabilities. And we were able to meet more often, increasing our communication and transparency among committees while educating one another on our different nations and cultural settings.

As we continue to move into becoming "pro-antiracist, intercultural and decentralized," a vision team has been organized to imagine and plan. We have expanded the Board of Directors to 14 for this next year, including two young adult representatives. And the Board Development committee is working on ensuring that the board is stabilized for the future by instituting an overlap of officers onto the Executive Committee and adhering to three-year commitments.

Staffing continues to be adjusted. Here's our current snapshot: Upon the retirement of Evelyn Hanneman and "rewire"ment of LeDayne Polaski, our board inherited and has been managing several small 10-15 hour



From the Board

contracts. Recently, Allison Paksoy moved to another opportunity for employment. And Katie Cook, editor of *Baptist Peacemaker*, will retire in November 2021.

Therefore, the Personnel Committee is recommending full time personnel to manage the organization's operations, communications and financial responsibilities. We have learned that it is hard to maintain the staff's creativity, passion and commitment with part time employees and contractors. We have also sketched a timeline for the Executive Director search and are handing it to the next Executive team to nominate a search committee. The Vision team and Personnel committee should work closely together as they restructure staff to meet the organization's vision and mission moving forward.

And, quite honestly, what has continually motivated this board of directors during our tenure is the gifted and generous staff of this organization. To say we have been blessed by Doris, Allison, Kristen, Katie, Rubén David, Hortensia, Ximena and intern Jasmin is an understatement. Their offerings of time and talent is immeasurable!

And we give thanks always for our members who have entrusted us with helping to lead this organization we adore and love. We look forward to the leadership of the incoming board, knowing we are in incredibly good, peace-loving hands! ■

BPFNA Board of Directors 2020-2021

President: Gail Hill, Chico, CA
Vice President: Verónica Garibay-Bravo,
Querétaro, MX
Secretary: Anita Peebles, Seattle, WA
Treasurer: Jaime Escobar, New York, NY

Other members:

Isai Altamirano, Mexico City, MX
Lina Forero, Cali, Colombia
Michelle Schellinger Gutiérrez,
Boston, MA
Zoe McMillan, Jacksonville, FL
Luis Calderon Reyes, San Juan, PR
Jason Smith, Arkadelphia, AR
Jessica Torres-Torres, Indianapolis, IN
Karen Turner, Toronto, ON
Roxanna Wright, Philadelphia, PA



What Inspires Us

From “No Longer Strangers” to going “Beyond Barriers,” our annual themes express our journey, commitments and hopes.

2014-2019:

No Longer Strangers

In 2014, the biblical image of “No Longer Strangers” became our overarching theme—to cross borders for peacemaking. It affirmed our bold desire to cross over those many boundaries keeping us apart: poverty, pollution, enemies in the worst scenario and strangers in the best. For five years, the BPFNA has crossed borders—providing awareness, education and training, and supporting projects to address the limits where injustice reigned. We were guided in this by our past Executive Director, Rev. LeDayne McLeese Polaski. We reaffirmed that despite the many “borders” between us, God has made us one. Pushing forth for that hope of unity, we continue to be peacemakers in a journey to go “Beyond Barriers” to become more and to belong to each other.

2019 and 2020, transition years:

Beyond Barriers

The year 2019 saw Rev. LeDayne Polaski and Evelyn Hanneman completing their work with BPFNA. Both represented a 20-year history of peacemaking within the BPFNA.

The board at the time developed an intense workload with the coming 2019 Global Baptist Peace Conference (GBPC) and the process to hire an Interim Executive Director. After the GBPC in Colombia, the board selected Rev. Dr. Doris García Rivera as Interim Director, to start in September 2019 to lead the organization with a strategic transitioning plan.

But then COVID-19 happened. By April 2020, it was already clear that we wouldn’t be able to celebrate the usual face-to-face 2020 Summer Conference (aka “Peace

Below: The 2019 BPFNA Board with LeDayne McLeese Polaski (third from right), shortly before her retirement.



What Inspires Us

Camp"). At that moment, the world was facing more than 3 million cases of COVID-19 and 207,973 people had died. Therefore, we transitioned into our very first Virtual Peace Conference. This conference was a challenge, but also became a highway to strengthen the regions, provide space for peacemakers to meet and establish a sound theological foundation for the present context. With free access to all, we completed 10 regional conferences and a major international plenary, with success beyond our dreams. ■



Board of Directors 2018-2019

President: Mayra Picos Lee, Wayne, PA

Vice President: Michael Ware,
Rochester, NY

Secretary: Fela Barrueto,
Fresh Meadows, NY

Treasurer: Rick Harris, Wayne, PA

Other members:

Jaime Escobar, New York, NY

Verónica Garibay-Bravo, Querétaro, MX

Gail Hill, Chico, CA

Anita Peebles, Seattle, WA

Michelle Schellinger Gutiérrez,
Boston, MA

Jessica Torres-Torres, Scottsdale, AZ;

Asaf Vera, México City, MX



*Top left:
Former Operations
Coordinator Evelyn
Hanneman, speaks at
a BPFNA Summer
Conference in Ontario.*

*Bottom left:
Former Communications
Manager Allison Paksoy
relaxes with board GBPC
staff during a meeting
in Colombia.*

What We Do

Belonging to Peacemaking—Together.
Our Annual Summer Conference is a special, globally known gathering where we connect, embrace each other and engage in fellowship.

2019 Global Baptist Peace Conference in Cali, Colombia • July 15-20

Peace in Our Land: Towards a World without Violence

The 2019 BPFNA Summer Conference was held in conjunction with the Global Baptist Peace Conference (GBPC). The campus of Unibautista Baptist Seminary in Cali, Colombia, was chosen as host to this gathering. We came together to recognize, honor and learn from the extraordinary achievement of the Peace Agreements in Colombia, which was shattered for so many years by armed conflict.

The BPFNA ~ Bautistas por la Paz staff and board played an essential role in organizing the conference, along with Unibautista Seminary, the Alliance of Baptists and the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. There were 380 attendees from 31 countries and participants from all of the world's continents.

The conference included worship services, plenaries, 36 workshops and storytelling around the themes "Liv-



La Conferencia Bautista Global por la Paz
GLOBAL BAPTIST PEACE CONFERENCE
15-20 de julio de 2019 • 15-20 July 2019
UNIBAUTISTA • CALI, COLOMBIA

Top right: Representatives from different countries participate in a panel; Bottom right: Some 380 attendees engage in ongoing discussions in the dining tent on the Unibautista Seminary campus in Cali, Colombia.



We Gather

ing in a World Without Violence,” “Rebuilding Communities with Justice and Love,” “Imagining a Just World Without Violence” and “Empowering Peacemakers.”

We had special activities for children and teenagers, youth and regional networking sessions, beautiful music from all over the world in various languages and an unforgettable growing altar. And we planted a Tree of Peace on the campus.

See reports and photos from the GBPC in the Fall 2019 issue of Baptist Peacemaker (Vol 39 No 4) at <http://bpfna.wpcomstaging.com/baptist-peacemaker-39-4>. To view conference videos, go to YouTube and search for the “Global Baptist Peace Conference” channel. To view a photo gallery from the conference, go to the Global Baptist Peace Conference Facebook page.

Testimonials from Cali

“Being in Cali and hearing the stories told there amounted to a call to action. There is something sacred about being physically present with people, about greeting one another in the same spirit across barriers of language and nationality. Together, holding hands, singing in multiple languages, learning and loving, we were able to remind each other that none of us is alone in the work of justice.”
—Anita Peebles

“Few things I will remember with more yearning and happiness than this Summer Conference in Cali. We joined ourselves as a great family in Christ and discovered together how wonderful and enriching it is to learn to be peacemakers.”
—Hortensia Azucena Picos Lee

2020 BPFNA’s First Virtual Peace Conference

Beyond Barriers, People Move

The 2020 BPFNA Summer Conference was originally planned to take place in San Diego, CA, but the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted our plans.

In a quick response from the Gatherings Committee and the Board of Directors, we moved to a virtual mode and made plans to hold the conference via Zoom.

We recruited 10 regional leaders. All of this required a larger team for tech support, video and music production and social media, but we managed it.

The virtual conference reached more regions than ever before, including those located in areas previously not in contact with Summer Conferences. The virtual mode turned out to be a huge advantage in avoiding financial and migration restrictions.

We discovered new ways to approach membership and peacemakers in the Americas. We incorporated new technology, which will be useful for performing and communicating BPFNA’s work in the future.

The conference included 10 regional meetings throughout the month of August, with Dr. Luis Rivera Pagán leading on the topic of “Prophetic Voice and Spirituality, Human Liberation and the Search for Peace.” There were 406 attendees at the regional meetings via Zoom, Facebook and Whatsapp. Some meetings in Southern Mexico and Cuba were in person.

At the end of the month, 175 people participated in the international plenary, with Dr. Pagán speaking on “The Theology of Migration.” The theme song, featuring 27 musicians and singers from six countries, was brought together virtually in one wonderful musical ensemble.

Throughout the conference, the BPFNA provided Zoom meetings and resources for children and youth.



BEYOND BARRIERS, PEOPLE MOVE
BPFNA-Bautistas por la Paz virtual Summer Conference / Saturday 29 August 2020

MÁS ALLÁ DE LAS BARRERAS, EL PUEBLO SE MUEVE
Conferencia de verano virtual de BPFNA-Bautistas por la Paz / sábado 29 de agosto de 2020

We Gather

The BPFNA is working on an Ebook for those who want to go back and experience parts of the conference again—to reflect or go deeper into the theology of xenophilia (loving the stranger, the neighbor, the different one) and to ponder on what it means to be in solidarity with one another. Watch for an announcement about this resource! To read about this remarkable conference, go to <https://bpfna.wpcomstaging.com/special-report-summer-conference-2020> to read the special *Baptist Peacemaker* report.

Testimonies from Summer Conference 2020

“Nothing replaces face-to-face encounters. However, this virtual method brought us a wonderful benefit because it allowed us to reach more people than we had imagined. We were divided into 10 regions whose contributions to the dialogue and program were very important. I think that a face-to-face virtual summer conference would not have involved that many people. Many would have been in doubt due to economic factors, visas and other “barriers.”
—Ximena Ulloa Montemayor, 2020 Summer Conference Coordinator

“[In Southern Mexico and Central America] we offered two regional conferences—virtual and face-to-face. The latter was with the purpose of including the most vulnerable groups. Therefore, as the regional leader for southern Mexico and in Central America, it represented an important step not only for my work as a peacemaker, but also as a woman and Indigenous leader.
—Dalia Eunice Juárez Fernández

2021 International Virtual Peace Conference • July 20-August 28 2021

Beyond Barriers: Soaring in the Spirit



“...but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary; they will walk and not be faint.” (Is. 40:31, NIV)

While the eagle inspired the prophet amidst his own challenges of injustice and needs, the logo of our 2021 Summer Conference portrays hummingbirds that

connect with both the sky and the earth. It was designed by Eleazar Pérez Encino, a Mayan Tzeltal who lives in Chiapas, the southernmost Mexican state.

In Indigenous traditions, hummingbirds carry thoughts of love, know no borders or barriers, and fly in full freedom. They are fierce fighters and defenders of their territory, and they see beyond human ranges of colors. They represent our desire for a world without borders and a horizon of a just and peaceful world.

Other logos submitted were shown during the 40 Days of Summer Conference, to represent the importance of diversity in the dreams of peacemakers.

This year’s virtual conference included 40 days of activities: workshops, panels, prayers, liturgies and activities for children and youth. These were designed to give peacemakers tools and practical resources to engage in peacemaking. We learned about pastoral care, advocacy, digital worship, art, resiliency, managing stress, responding to ideologies and much more.

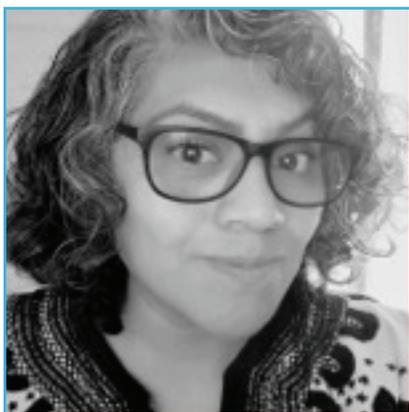
Panels on critical issues on racism and violence against women gathered the experience of the four BPFNA member nations with a leadership active in social movements within these areas. The conference closed on August 28, 2021, with Rev. Douglas Avilesbernal as the keynote speaker.

Go to www.bpfna.org/conference-conferencial for more on this year’s conference. ■



We Equip & Mobilize

Meet Dalia



Rev. Dalia Eunice Juárez Fernández, a Nahuatl woman from San Gabriel Chilac, Puebla, MX, is one of the few Indigenous women with a degree in theology in Mexico.

With a Master in Practical Theology from Palmer Theological Seminary and a Bachelor of Theology and Indigenous Ministries from the Baptist Seminary of Mexico, she has developed a deep passion for peace and justice.

Supported by a grant from the BPFNA World Peace Fund in 2019, Dalia and other Indigenous leaders participated in the Art and Communication Workshop for Peace, an intercultural educational project where art and communication experiences via photography and video became new tools.

The group used these tools to reflect on their reality and tell stories—not only personal stories, but also stories of their own marginalization.

Dalia is founder of the Community of Indigenous Theologians of ABYA YALA “COTIAY.” She participated in the World Council of Churches’ Commission on Ecumenical and Formation (EEF) Webinar on Racial Justice.

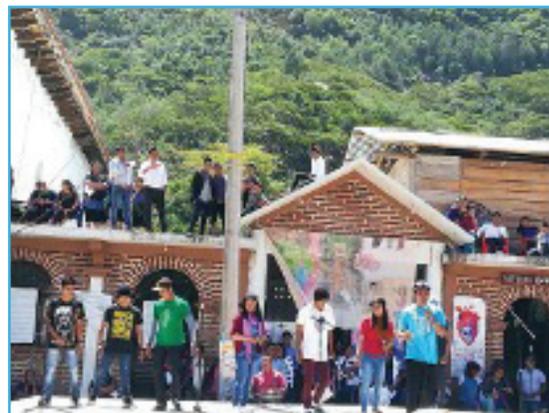
She is the current General Coordinator of the Mayan Intercultural Seminary (Seminario Intercultural Mayense, or SIM) in Chiapas, MX, sharing the seminary’s vision of education, unity and a culture for peace with justice among men, women, youth and children facing racial discrimination and poverty.

SIM is unique, not only deeply rooted in the gospel with a liberating perspective, but also deeply rooted in honoring the ways and being of Indigenous cultures. The seminary has engaged Indigenous cultures in the intersection of scripture and everyday life, in a quest to understand how one nurtures the other. It teaches how the two urge, challenge and persuade each other to change hearts and improve the world around them.

—You can support this work by donating to the Gavel Memorial Peace Fund. Contact bpfna@bpfna.org to find out how to donate. ■



*Top, first column: Dalia Juárez Fernández.
Left and right: Photos from the Art and Communication Workshop for Peace sponsored by BPFNA ~ Bautistas por la Paz.*



The seminary has engaged Indigenous cultures in the intersection of scripture and everyday life, in a quest to understand how one nurtures the other. It teaches how the two urge, challenge and persuade each other to change hearts and improve the world around them.

What We Do

Grants 2019-2020

The Peace Fund ~ Fondos por la Paz was established by the BPFNA Board of Directors in 2018 as a response to the foreseeable depletion of the Gavel Memorial Peace Fund. This program gives grants to empower small, grassroots groups doing the work of peacemaking on a local or regional level. Given the significance of the work accomplished and the relationships created by the Gavel Fund, the Board agreed to begin a commitment of allocating a percentage of contributions each year to fund grants, beginning in 2018 with a 3 percent commitment and thereafter increasing annually by 2 percent until reaching 10 percent of annual giving income.

Thanks to your faithful support, the Peace Fund ~ Fondos por la Paz program has awarded several grants in its short life.

In 2019, a total of \$7,482 was equally distributed among the following organizations:

- AMEXTRA (Mexico) to provide ongoing nonviolence education for children in marginalized communities.
- CROSSING LINES AFRICA (Uganda) to offer training in conflict transformation and in trauma awareness and resilience for South Sudanese refugees.

- PAN AFRICA PEACE NETWORK-BURUNDI (Burundi) to provide conflict transformation training for youth leaders and people living with albinism.

Very modest grants allow us to be in solidarity with people of faith endeavoring to create peace rooted in justice, working in ways suited to their context and shared by local leadership, often in very dangerous situations....

–Ad Hoc committee considering options for the Gavel Fund

- SEMINARIO BAUTISTA DE MÉXICO (Mexico) to lead peacemaking workshops in Indigenous churches and in congregations in marginalized areas near Mexico City. With the Peace Fund grant and complementary funding, Suriana González and her team carried out eight workshops on Conflict Transformation in eight learning communities and two workshops for team leaders with

Below, left: A woman participates in a workshop in Burundi. Below, right: Indigenous women participate in a Conflict Transformation training in Mexico.



We Equip & Mobilize

emphasis on peace education in Mexico City and Chimalhuacán.

- SEMINARIO INTERCULTURAL MAYENSE (Mexico) towards the seminary's work with Indigenous communities impacted by injurious government policies. Using the people's own art (poetry, story, music, drawing, video, photography), this project helped empower them for collective resistance. (See also page 11 of this report.)
- SEPAZ (Colombia) for its work with women who have encountered gender violence. The project offered economic empowerment along with psychological and spiritual support.

In 2020, some of the activities funded by the Peace Fund ~ Fondos por la Paz were limited by the coronavirus pandemic. However, most of our grantees managed to carry out their activities with proper regard to health measures. A total of \$2,500 was distributed as follows:

- PAN AFRICA PEACE NETWORK – BURUNDI (Burundi) received \$1,000 to continue their excellent projects on conflict transformation and peacemaking workshops.
- Idéphonse Niyokindi, a courageous peacemaker in the African country of Burundi and country representative of the Pan-African Peace Network, has worked for several years to mitigate violence and empower the youth in his community to foster peaceful cohesion and political tolerance. With his Peace Fund ~ Fondos por la Paz grant, he carried out a two-day workshop for 30 partic-



Participants in the Bugenyuzi commune, Province of Karuzi in early March, 2020. (See the photos on page 14.)

The remaining \$1,500 was awarded evenly among the following organizations:

- PEACEBUILDING, HEALING AND RECONCILIATION PROGRAM/PHARP (Kenya) for its project to equip 50 key women leaders with peace



Above, right: Leaders of the Peacebuilding, Healing and Reconciliation Program (PHARP) in Kenya.

Bottom, right: Participants in a training program on conflict prevention in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

What We Do

Grants, *continued*

- and conflict transformation skills to address violent conflict caused by retrogressive cultural practices among pastoralists in the Kajiado North County.
- COMMUNITY ACTION FOR INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT (Democratic Republic of Congo) for its training program on conflict prevention and peaceful cohabitation, as well as the establishment

of consultation frameworks between communities in conflict in Fizi, South Kivu.

- CORPORACIÓN MILAGROS DE AMOR/CorMA (Puerto Rico) to equip the homeless community its people serve in the First Baptist Church in Caguas, with reading and writing skills, so that they can overcome the situations of physical and verbal abuse, human trafficking and sexual abuse they face everyday.

Learn more about application guidelines and dates at www.bpfna.org/grants-subsenciones.

Another grant awarded in 2019 came from the Williamson Fund. The overseeing committee awarded \$500 to QC Family Tree, an organization located in Enderly Park in Charlotte, NC, a mostly black and brown and mostly poor community “at the intersection of rapid gentrification, an affordable housing crisis, food insecurity, unequal education and mass incarceration.” (Rev. Greg Jarrell). The grant funded an Ebook compiling the Muddy Turtle Talks, an ongoing storytelling project highlighting the experiences of this corner of the city. You can download the pdf of the Ebook under “blogs” at www.qcfamilytree.org. ■



Left, top and bottom: Young people participate in a 30-day training facilitated by the Pan-African Peace Network in Burundi.

We Equip & Mobilize

Training, Resources & Advocacy 2019-2020

To say that 2020 was a “peculiar year” is an understatement. So many things happened—so much pain, so much loss. In these pandemic times, the BPFNA website (www.bpfna.org) has become a growing resource space for peace, justice and social action for churches, nonprofits, seminaries, and individuals seeking theological and social education, with practical ideas on peace and justice projects and organizing social actions. The pandemic limited our travel, but not our presence in places and around issues related to peace and justice.

- Our Board of Directors is very intentional on **learning about peace and justice issues** in the region. We were very grateful to receive the Hon. Judge LaDoris Cordell in our March 2020 meeting to learn about the history of oppression of Black people in our region. (To learn more about Judge Cordell, go to the Stanford Law School site at bawtp.laaw.stanford.edu.) We received country reports from Canada, the history of Puerto Rico, the women’s movement in Mexico and the recent protests in Colombia. (You can read about these and other interesting topics at www.bpfna.org/news.)

- Our award-winning journal/magazine, *Baptist Peacemaker*, began publishing all issues digitally, while printing two of the four quarterly issues. It also became fully bilingual with the hiring of Spanish editor Rubén David Bonilla Ramos.

- **Puerto Rico Relief.** Puerto Rico started the year hearing the rumbles of the earth. On

*Members of the Puerto Rican community box up relief supplies for earthquake victims.
Photo by Ruben Diaz, Jr.*

January 6, an earthquake hit the island, causing devastation, including property and personal damage. With the donations of peacemakers and in coordination with the Baptist churches of Puerto Rico, BPFNA~ Bautistas por la Paz provided meat for 14 days to more than 150 people. We also provided medicines and first aid to people affected by the earthquakes. Alongside a pastoral convoy, Doris García-Rivera, our Interim Executive Director, visited two refugee camps for displaced people and provided spiritual and emotional support and distributed basic sanitary toiletries, clothing and water. BPFNA also participated with the denominational leadership in devotions, biblical reflections and simply “being there.” Read all about her experience in Doris’s post “Stronghold amidst the Tremors” at www.bpfna.org/news.

- **COVID-19 Faith Resources.** February brought COVID-19 with millions infected, gasping for air, and a growing death toll. The pandemic also caused devastation in global markets, jobs, brought traveling at a stop, and brought us face to face with the need of improving relations with



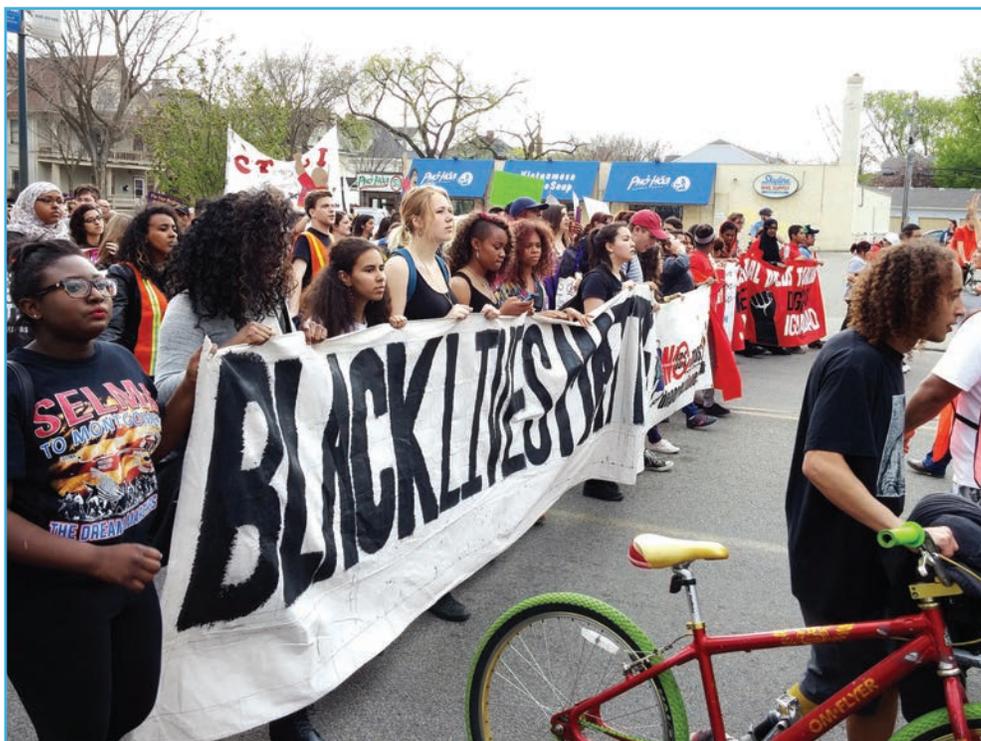
We Equip & Mobilize

nature and with marginalized communities. Our staff compiled a series of articles, resources for reopening, prayers, hymns, guides, pledges, petitions, self care and other resources for our members and anyone interested in faith-based tools to navigate the pandemic. Check them out at www.bpfna.org/covid19.

- **Black Lives Matter.** In May, the world was shaken by the death of George Floyd, mobilizing millions across the US and the world against police violence and racism. It made visible the oozing wound at the heart of the US that we have not been able or willing to heal in our white supremacist history. On June 9, 2020, together with the Alliance of Baptists and American Baptist Home Mission Society (ABHMS), BPFNA ~ Bautistas por la Paz issued a Joint Statement on Racism in the US, signed by more than 100 individuals and representatives of churches in the US, Puerto Rico, Mexico, Brazil and Uganda. We were united by the urge to come together and publicly acknowledge this system of oppression, as well as to call for a stop in the use of active US military against protesters. Our website was populated with essential antiracist educational and action-driven material for our constituency,

mostly developed by organizations specialized in denouncing police violence, educating on anti-racism and denouncing white supremacy. (See www.bpfna.org/antiracism-contralracismo to see this wide array of resources.)

- **2020 Summer Conference Resources.** For the first time in our history, our website and Facebook page feature the songs, conferences and materials from our annual gathering, so that they are available for all. See more at our Summer Conference 2020 resource site (www.bpfna.org/resources-recursos-2020) and follow us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/bpfna/videos. Our social media accounts are more active than ever!
- **Anti-imperialism and Decolonization.** In October of 2020 we added a series of useful resources on Indigenous People's Day (www.bpfna.org/antiimperialism-decolonization) for our membership in the US.
- **US elections:** November 2020-January 2021. With the possibility of violent scenarios in the electoral process of the US, given the ideological polarization, the disinformation regarding mail-in ballots, and the construction of a narrative of a fraudulent electoral process, BPFNA curated and offered peacemakers reliable information, materials and practical tools to help them face the unrest. The workshop "Dialogues in Democracy" was developed as a breathing space to share concerns, center expectations and point to actions in preparation for unrest. For more, see our post, "Counting Every Vote as a Matter of Justice" at www.bpfna.org/news. ■



Left: A Black Lives Matter action in Minneapolis, MN. Photo by Fibonacci Blue.

How We Work

BPFNA Financial Snapshot as of July 30, 2021

Currently we maintain accounts at two banks, but plan to move everything from Truliant since they are unable to handle our wire transfers and Canadian cheques.

Truliant Credit Union

Checking **\$7,754.76**

Savings **\$18,664.50**

Peace Fund \$982.24

Sehested Endowment \$2,500.00

Trip Scholarships – Equal Exchange \$2,997.99

Williamson Fund \$2,223.0...

Future Programs \$116.93

Hispanic Summer Program \$5,481.00

BPFNA Funds \$4,363.28

Money Market **\$62,578.93**

Reserve Funds \$3,278.93

Field Organizer \$9,300.00

Gavel Funds \$50,000.00

South State Bank

Checking **\$35,592.75**

BPFNA Funds \$34,542.75

Designated for Chiapas \$1,050.00

Money Market **\$261,892.68**

BPFNA Funds \$44,340.12

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*Right: Ximena Ulloa Montemayor and Luz Amparo Chaguendo Ospina, Co-ordinators of the Global Baptist Peace Conference, held jointly with the 2019 BPFNA Summer Conference.
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When they lost their property, leaders of the Seminario Bautista in Mexico City took their classes to the mountains. Right: A 2020 group of graduates pose with their certificates.

Photo courtesy of Noé Trujillo Hernández & Suriana González Juárez



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Right: The BPFNA followed closely the massive women's protests in Mexico in March 2020. Photos courtesy of Verónica Garibay-Bravo.



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