



# Peace Advocate News

*Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.*  
*Matthew 5:9*

**Peace begins when you make your peace with Jesus, accept Him as Savior and follow Him as Lord.**

Volume 11:1

Fall 2017

## The World That Hate Is Building

The presence of hate groups in America has entered into the public's awareness in recent weeks because of events in the news. Defining what a hate group is and what the intentions of such groups are has been made to appear fuzzy in some quarters in part because the groups themselves are intentionally trying to make their very ugly ideas appear 'good' and 'wholesome' to appeal to the 'mainstream' in American society. The mainstream has generally rejected the ideas of these groups as cruel and wrong, but the current fuzziness is also because some on the edges of the mainstream are currently willing to court these groups to further ideas of their own.

So, how are hate groups defined? All hate groups have some things in common:

- All hate groups have beliefs or practices that attack or malign an entire class of people, typically for their immutable [unalterable] characteristics.
- Hate group activities can include criminal acts, marches, rallies, speeches, meetings, leafleting or publishing.<sup>1</sup>

Increasingly, hate groups are spreading their message over the internet through websites and social media more than through personal confrontations, events, and actions that helped defined them in the past. The internet and social media make it easy to 'package' ugly ideas in a palatable form. The tendency of so many people to accept anything as true and creditable just because it appears on the internet makes 'selling' hate easier. Targeting people who are likely to be sympathetic is easier because of the wealth of personal information about people the internet provides – often because some individuals will share anything on-line. Personal confrontations by hate groups (rallies, marches, criminal acts, etc.), are not just a thing of the past, however, as recent events in the news indicate. The willingness of these groups to resort to violence also has not changed. Their intention is not dialog, cooperation, or coexistence with the people they attack or malign. They seek to subjugate, or eliminate and destroy them – violently if necessary.

Some on the mainstream fringes are sympathetic to hate group ideology and, to promote their own goals, are willing to court the support of hate groups. They are bringing the rhetoric of hate into public discourse where it is becoming a staple because some political leaders use and promote it. This has in turn emboldened those whose hate filled thinking has been an undercurrent in society which this country has been struggling to overcome since the founding of the nation. Those who would turn back America's efforts to live out the best of ourselves and the dream of one nation of freedom and justice for all, are currently gaining momentum as they try to put up walls of prejudice, exclusion, bigotry, and selfish self-interest.

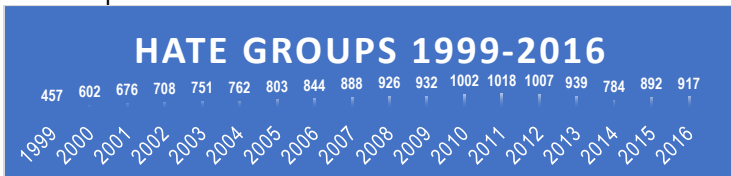
While there are some hate groups that are not white groups, the majority of hate groups are white groups. It is these white hate groups that are making inroads into the mainstream at present. They are tapping into the economic and social stresses of a changing society. Especially some white Americans currently long to return to the 'good old days' when life is remembered as having been 'good'. The definition of 'good' may not be clear or even supportable if all issues are considered. Most important, this longing for a 'better past' at best ignores and at worst intentionally seeks a return to times when life was 'good' for some white Americans but painful and oppressive for everyone else. The reality that the 'privileges' of a few were possible only at the expense of the abuse of and the poverty of others – most of whom were not white, is often forgotten or ignored. Part of the ugly truth about hate groups is that they intentionally want to return to the past with this reality in place.

The changing nature of the economy in America is also a big factor. The increasing use of automation in the work place and the frequency with which companies send jobs overseas to maximize company profits has increased wealth for a few but left many with no access to good paying jobs even if their parents had such jobs. For the first time in living memory, many young people do not expect to live at least as well as their parents did and see no chance to live better. The American myth of the 'self-made-man' (man not woman) who can get to the top by just working hard enough has always ignored the reality that everyone is subject to disadvantages or advantages which affect their prospects and are beyond their control. Chief among these are race, gender, to whom one is born, where one is born, and when one is born. The philosophy of valuing people primarily by their productivity not their personhood, and the prevalence of greed in society are also important factors.

Another piece of this longing for the past among some white Americans is a product of the fact that demographic realities mean white Americans will be in the minority in the country they consider 'theirs' by 2043. This possibility is generating panic for some who fear that, if minorities become the majority, they will treat whites the same way whites treated them. . .

Hate is ugly. Hate is wrong. Hate goes against the teachings of the God we serve. One of the worst sins those who promote hate can commit is trying to justify their hate by trying to wrap it in religion and validate it with scripture. A society at its best always includes all people and cares for the most vulnerable people in their midst. A society at its best also works for the good of the larger world community not only for its own self-interests. A society that is collapsing and failing is one that embraces division, fuels mistrust, stokes fear, promotes hate, and uses old grudges to turn neighbors against each other. The

ethnic violence that erupted in some eastern bloc countries when the Soviet Union broke up and erupts in other places in the world during times of political and social change tragically illustrate the point. Hate filled rhetoric and divisive politics are first steps to destruction. . .



Southern Poverty Law Center Statistics

“In 2000 the Intelligence Project of the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) identified 602 hate groups active around the country. By 2007 the number of groups had risen to 888, a 48% increase over 2000.” Between 2011 and 2014 there was a slight decline in the number of hate groups but now the number is on the rise again. In 2016 SPLC was tracking 917 such groups. This is a 17% increase over 2014. 35 of these hate groups operate in Ohio.

<sup>1</sup>Definition from the Southern Poverty Law Center Hate Map  
The Southern Poverty Law Center <https://www.splcenter.org/>  
See also: “The World That Hate Built.” *Peace Advocate News*. spring 2008. Vol. 2:3



## Remember Nigeria!

### Update



There are many signs of hope and reasons for praise in Nigeria despite the continuing threats of violence and famine. The August 31 Global Mission and Service prayer update reported: “Praise God for the recent baptism of 36 ‘Chibok girls,’ young women who were abducted from their school in Chibok in 2014.” “These

young women have been released from Boko Haram captivity in the past year and join 10 other Chibok abductees who have been baptized by Ekklesiyar Yan’uwa a Nigeria (EYN, Church of the Brethren in Nigeria).” EYN pastor Paul Abraham Chandumi conducted the service in Abuja, the capital city of Nigeria. The baptisms were held at the center where the young women are still under Nigerian government security. Two of the young women’s children were dedicated during the same service.

EYN is also helping families return home or relocate. They are distributing food, and helping supply needed tools and seed for families to resume farming and return to supporting themselves. EYN churches are rebuilding where they can and meeting in temporary spaces where they must. *Newsline* reports that a grant from the Church of the Brethren in the US will help 20 congregations in Nigeria rebuild their church buildings. Thousands are still displaced, and for many, returning home is still not possible. Boko Haram continues their campaign of violence and destruction. People are still facing hunger. Continued prayers and support for our Nigerian brothers and sisters is needed.

Sources: Church of the Brethren *Newsline* 8-31-2017 and 10-20-2017.

# Glimmers of Hope

September 20 marks another glimmer of hope on the world stage as, after months of talks, the United Nations formally placed a treaty to ban nuclear weapons on the table for nations to sign. Three nations--the Holy See (Vatican), Thailand, and Guyana--ratified the treaty on the same day as it was opened for signature, according to the World Council of Churches (WCC). “By signing the treaty today, these nations have taken a lead in protecting all our countries and the planet that is our home,” said WCC general secretary Olav Fykse Tveit. 49 countries have already signed the treaty which was adopted in July by two-thirds of the 93 UN member states. This is a historic new treaty, the WCC release noted. It “bans the manufacture, possession and use of nuclear weapons and provides pathways for their eventual elimination. It not only prohibits nuclear weapons, it also requires the provision of aid to victims and environmental remediation,” the release said. The treaty will enter into force 90 days after 50 countries have ratified it, the final step after signature. The WCC is one of many groups that have been working for six years to bring such a treaty about. The WCC first denounced the production, deployment, and use of nuclear weapons as a crime against humanity in 1983. WCC general secretary Olav Fykse Tveit is urging national leaders to quickly ratify as well as sign the treaty. “This new treaty has [the] potential to save millions of lives, and creation itself, from the most destructive and indiscriminate weapons ever developed by human beings.”

Sources: Church of the Brethren *Newsline* 9-21-2017. World Council of Churches web site at [oikoumene.org/en/press-center/news/dozens-of-countries-sign-nuclear-weapons-ban-treaty](http://oikoumene.org/en/press-center/news/dozens-of-countries-sign-nuclear-weapons-ban-treaty)



## Making a Difference for PEACE!

### Here Is A Report on Peace Day September 21, 2017

On Earth Peace (OEP) reports that Peace Day 2017 was a success. Many congregations around the country and some overseas participated in praying for peace. Here are a few of this year’s events. To see a full list of congregations and groups involved, visit <https://www.facebook.com/groups/OEP.PeaceDay/>. If you have anything to share about the day from your congregation (thoughts, comments, or photos) please share them for this newsletter using the contact information on page four. Also, feel free to share them with OEP by posting them on #PeaceDay #PeaceDayPray

- Lafayette Church of the Brethren - marched and sang around a peace pole and held signs witnessing the Gospel of Peace, followed by prayer and reflection.
- City Montessori School in Lucknow, India participated

- Modesto Church of the Brethren - Prayer and labyrinth walk.
- Manchester University in North Manchester Indiana - Held a prayer service, a labyrinth walk, and roundtable discussions on Peace and Justice, including racial justice, environmental justice, immigration, and Palestine.
- Christian Peacemaker Teams in Lesvos, Greece - visited the Life Jacket Cemetery to honor over 100,000 refugees who fled their homes in the Middle East & Northern Africa to seek a peaceful life.
- Peace Museum in Dayton Ohio - walked in celebration of peace symbols
- Lansing Church of the Brethren - Vespers for Peace service of prayer, song, and silence.
- Northwest Suburban Peace and Education Project in Arlington Heights - Peace Vigil
- Lower Miami Church of the Brethren, Dayton Ohio - Feast for Peace, 35 people from 9 churches in attendance.
- Ambler, Pennsylvania - Candlelight Peace Vigil Walks, carrying candle lanterns and making witness for peace.
- Arlington Church of the Brethren - Children and parents making woven potholders to offer to the congregation in exchange for donations to the Montessori for Peace preschool in Nigeria, and interfaith camps for persons displaced by conflict.
- Cameroon - Association for Community Awareness held a conference to share stories and experiences for peace.
- La Verne Church of the Brethren - held several events, talks, and prayer services.
- Fort Wayne, Indiana - rallied at the Allen County Court House for Peace Day.
- University of Maine - Participation in the Kindness Rocks Project.
- Minneapolis, Minnesota - held a fundraiser for imprisoned human rights worker in Turkey.
- Timbercrest Senior Living Community, North Manchester, IN - had a chapel service, a talk by local Professor of Religion, and prayers and songs around the peace pole.
- Hartford, Michigan - Deacon Jim Rauner presented an Action for Peace course on Social Justice and Nonviolence.
- Prince of Peace Church in Littleton, Colorado - hosted a Peace Fest including face painting, puppet making, and crafts.
- Everylight Online Prayer Vigil

Virginia Rendler, OEP *Peace Day* Intern

## Worship Resources

### Make Prayers for Peace Part of Your Worship Remember in prayer:

1. **World leaders willing to risk the use of nuclear weapons** to save face, project personal power, advance their self-interest, to show off, just because they can. . .
2. **People recovering from natural disasters** – hurricanes, earth quakes, fires . . . especially those who are not getting the basic help they need
3. **Yemen, Niger, & elsewhere;** where the U.S. is involved in often forgotten wars in which civilians are victims every day.
4. **All people in this world who live with war.**

5. **People facing torture.**
6. People trying to put their lives & their countries back together after living through **genocide or 'ethnic cleansing'** events. Myanmar, & Rwanda are only two of many such places.
7. **People affected by gun violence.**
8. **South Sudan:** is facing a devastating famine. The country has the worst human rights record in the world. Large numbers of people continue to flee to Uganda to escape violence there.
9. **Nigeria:** the 82 Chibok school girls released in May; & the 21 released in October; their families & communities. The 106 Chibok girls & more than 2,000 other women & children still missing, EYN, all those affected by the violence & now famine.
10. Rejoice with **46 Chibok girls baptized** by EYN since their release from Boko Haram. These girls now held in government security.
11. Lubungo Ron, a leader of Eglise des Freres au Congo (the Church of the Brethren in the **Democratic Republic of Congo**), asks prayers for people of the South Kivu province where high levels of violence are occurring, especially in Fizi and Uvira territories. "Ron reports that 'people are killed day by day--it is like a massacre,'" the update said.
12. **Bangladesh** – brutal attacks by Islamist militants on minority groups including non-Muslims and intellectuals are rising.
13. **Those facing execution** – & those willing to execute because they put revenge above redemption & forgiveness
14. **Those in prison** because of their beliefs.
15. All those whose lives are dominated by **fear**.
16. **People affected by gun negligence** – especially 525 child shooters in 2016. Many shooters are toddlers. . .
17. **People Displaced** because of war or political unrest including the people of **Syria, Myanmar, Democratic Republic of Congo, countries in the Middle East, and South America**
18. People **working for peace** locally and in the world.
19. Those who **don't know God's peace** & have lost hope & joy.
20. **Veterans'** living with their part in war. 18 U.S. Iraq/Afghanistan veterans commit suicide every day. (US Veterans Affairs statistics)
21. **Girls & Women** facing abuse and violence every day
22. **Child Soldiers**
23. **People facing Deportation** –women, children, & men are frequently pulled from their homes & work places, with little due process. Some children come home from school to find parents gone without warning. . .
24. **Those now waging war by remote control** – they push buttons from far away that hurt or kill men, women, children

## Peacemaking Remembrance Dates!



**December 3, 1997.** The Mine Ban Treaty was signed to ban the use of landmines. 156 Countries have signed it. The US is one of 39 countries that have not. (see vol. 5:10, Sprint 2011 for article.)

**December 10.** Human Rights Day



## Be Part of the Youth Peace Travel Team Applications for 2018 are Due January 5<sup>th</sup>

The Youth Peace Travel Team (YPTT) is a group of four Brethren young adults (age 18-23) that spends the summer traveling to Church of the Brethren camps. The Team engages and teaches youth about issues of peace and justice while living and learning with campers throughout the week. The team's primary goal is to talk with other young people about the Christian message and the Brethren tradition of peacemaking. Apply to be a part of the team by filling out a Ministry Summer Service application at <http://www.brethren.org/yya/mss/>. Indicate that you are applying for the Youth Peace Travel Team.

YPTT is a joint project of On Earth Peace, Church of the Brethren Inc., Bethany Theological Seminary, and Outdoor Ministries Association.



The greatest gift Jesus gave us is Love;  
and the second is Forgiveness!  
He meant for us to share them both!

### Did You Know:

- The military receives at least an 80 billion-dollar increase annually – usually with little discussion
- the current Senate budget proposal is for 700 billion-dollars for the military – more than either Trump or the military asked for.
- This spending would be the single largest reason the proposed budget would add to the deficit
- Only 47 billion a year would enable all public colleges and universities to provide education tuition free
- If the 80 billion added to the military budget each year for the next ten years was used to pay off student debt instead, it would nearly eliminate all exiting student debt.

*Making peace cannot happen without seeking justice and justice must be tempered by mercy. Seeking vengeance, revenge, retribution, or only 'political capital' does not bring either peace or justice especially when innocent people are involved.*

### Organize a Dream Sabbath

800,000 children fall under the provisions of the Dream Act – the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program. They were brought into the country as children. They had no say in the matter. Most have no memory of living anywhere else and have no 'home' anywhere else. To be part of DACA they had to voluntarily register with the government and have already been 'vetted' by the government. They had to demonstrate that they were in school, working, or both; that they were not involved in any crime or drug use. . . Many are now married with families.

These young people were promised by the government that the information they shared to become part of DACA would not be used against them to target them for deportation.

Church World Service (CWS) has long worked with and for immigrants along with the churches CWS represents including the Church of the Brethren. CWS works with the Interfaith Immigration Coalition which has released a statement on the situation with the Dream Act. The statement reads in part:

*The consequences of ending DACA are immediate, devastating, and profound. No new DACA applications filed after today [September 5, 2017] will be considered, and current DACA recipients will see their protection revoked starting in six months. DACA has protected nearly 800,000 immigrant youth from deportation and allowed them to work, attend school, and raise a family. DACA's termination puts these lives at risk, threatens the sanctity of family unity, and jeopardizes our economy with the loss of more than \$460 billion in GDP over the course of 10 years and the removal of 685,000 workers from the workforce.*

Source: [interfaithimmigration.org/dream](http://interfaithimmigration.org/dream)

CWS is advocating for the DACA program. Along with partners in the Interfaith Immigration Coalition, CWS is inviting congregations to stand in solidarity with immigrant youth by organizing a Dream Sabbath, "ideally before the end of October," said a release. A Dream Sabbath can be:

- dedicating time during a regular weekly worship service to having immigrant youth share their stories and asking congregants to take action in support of the Dream Act
- a vigil
- meeting with your Senators and Representatives, etc.

### Find a Dream Sabbath toolkit online at

[www.interfaithimmigration.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Dream-Sabbath-2017-4-FINAL-09.108.17.pdf](http://www.interfaithimmigration.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Dream-Sabbath-2017-4-FINAL-09.108.17.pdf)

Congregations that hold an event are invited to log it on a map at [bit.ly/DreamSabbathMap](http://bit.ly/DreamSabbathMap) by the end of October, to demonstrate the breadth of support from people of faith across the country.

### For more resources, visit [interfaithimmigration.org/dream](http://interfaithimmigration.org/dream).

Source: Church of the Brethren *Newsline* September 21, 2017.

### Did You Know

**There is a mass shooting in the U.S. 9 out of every 10 days of the year. Most do not make the news.**



**Resource List**



See specific articles for related resource information.



Linda Fry, District Peace Advocate  
Church of the Brethren, Northern Ohio District  
492 Connor Drive, Mansfield, OH 44905  
(419) 589-7719 ✉ [linda@nohcob.org](mailto:linda@nohcob.org)