



*Cultivating Justice,
Nonviolence & Well-being*

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A nonprofit organization

Store Hours

Monday-Thursday

10 a.m.-5 p.m.

closed Fridays

Saturday 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Inside

**Networking Across Class
Lines / 3**

Muriel T. Stackley, part 4 / 4

Christmas Gifts for Peace / 5

October-November-December 2010

PEACE CONNECTIONS NEWSLETTER

DeHart Describes God's Heart for the Poor

by Gordon Hauser

If you removed all the verses in the Bible that mention God's concern for the poor, said Allison DeHart on recent Monday evening, it would be a pretty limp book.

About 70 people gathered at Grace Community Church on August 16 to hear DeHart, who is executive director of Partners of Hope in Troy, Ohio, talk about "How Circles™ Fits with the Gospel: God's Heart for the Poor." She told the audience that "more than 400 verses in the Bible talk about God's heart for the poor," and she gave many examples.

She read Jeremiah 22:16: "He judged the cause of the poor and needy; then it was well. Is not this to know me? Says the Lord." And Jesus, she said, saw as part of his own call "to bring good news to the poor" (Luke 4:18).

Most of those gathered to hear DeHart have some connection to the Circles™ Initiative of Harvey County, which has just changed its name to Circles™ of Hope. While Circles™ is a national organization, the mission of the local movement is "working to end poverty in Kansas one family at a time."

DeHart told the audience how she moved from working as an accountant for six years before feeling called by God to help others in a more direct way. Eventually she became a social worker for Partners of Hope, which was started by the Troy Council of Churches.

"People in need often come to churches for help," she said, and the churches in Troy decided to coordinate their efforts and hire someone to focus on this service. The churches realized "they were helping people, but they weren't really empowering them to help themselves," DeHart said. They wanted people to "experience the possibilities of transformation."

To learn more about how to do this work, DeHart visited Church of the Saviour in Washington, D.C., where she learned the importance of being with the poor. This church emphasized "mutually liberating relationships." In other words, we are to develop relationships with people in poverty that are not top-down but mutual, benefiting both parties.

A biblical example of this, DeHart said, is Jesus' visit with the Samaritan woman at the well (John 4), in which Jesus and the woman serve each other.

Later, DeHart studied books by Ruby Payne and came across the Circles™ Initiative, which "seeks to build relationships across class lines."

She described the Circles™ model, which has in the center a circle leader. This is a person in poverty who has gone through a training course called Getting Ahead.

■ Continued on page 2

DeHart

■ Continued from page 1

Joining this person are two to four allies who have been trained in a course called Bridges Out of Poverty. They serve in this circle of support as friends with the circle leader.

Other groups in the model, such as a Guiding Coalition, look at larger issues in the local community that affect the lives of people in poverty.

DeHart then drew attention to various passages in the Bible that support these different elements of the Circles™ model. She read from Ecclesiastes 4:12; 1 John 3:17-18; Proverbs 22:2; Proverbs 31:9; Philippians 2:4 and Proverbs 15:22.

She showed a clip from a video called “Compassion by Command,” a seven-week Bible study on building relationships with people in poverty. This clip described “reciprocal blessing,” how the poor tend to know how to live by faith and are more generous than other groups. The video made the point that we can’t learn from each other unless we get together.

DeHart said that churches show a lot of generosity but are often reluctant to develop relationships with people in need. She acknowledged that working with the poor can be challenging and present difficulties, but she finds great encouragement in Isaiah 58:10: “If you offer your food to the hungry and satisfy the needs of the afflicted, then your light shall rise in the darkness and your gloom be like the noonday.”



Myrna Krehbiel, Jerica Hinshaw, and Allison DeHart

Myrna Krehbiel, director of Peace Connections and a leader in Circles™ of Hope, introduced a video clip of a conversation between Jerica Hinshaw, a circle leader, and Clarence Rempel, one of her allies. Hinshaw described how she set goals for herself, and Rempel described how allies and circle leaders help and encourage one another.

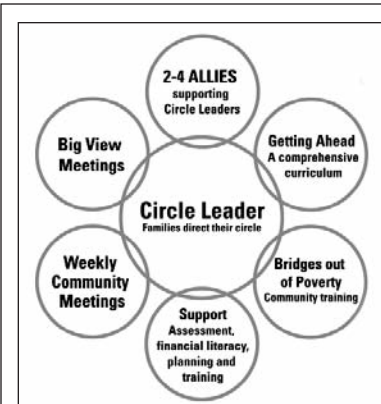
Wanda Pumphery, Circles™ Coach, held a conversation in front of the audience with Brenda Learned, another of Hinshaw’s allies, about her role as an ally and what she has learned. She described the progress Hinshaw has already made in working toward her goals. In fact, Hinshaw could not attend the meeting because she was beginning another semester at Hutchinson Community College that evening.

Pumphrey said that Circles™ of Hope recognizes that, according to one study, it is four times as hard to develop relationships across class and economic lines. However, this is happening here in Newton, she said.

Steve Richards, who has helped in the development of the local Circles™ initiative, told the audience that Circles™ not only helps individuals and families but it makes our communities more sustainable.

DeHart might have added that it is also in tune with the heart of God.

(This article also appeared in *The Newton Kansan*)



We invite you to consider being a part of Circles in some way: Stop by and investigate what Circles is all about, attend a Tuesday evening meeting, have a presentation for your Sunday School class or group, become an Ally, donate a meal, or consider a quarterly contribution. It’s a great way to enrich our community and your life! (See calendar on p. 6 for next Ally training dates!)

Circles: What's New?

We were pleased to have a site visit in mid-August with Allison DeHart, Move the Mountain affiliate staff member, including a community meeting on "How Circles Fits with the Gospel." This visit gave us clarity on what we are doing well and what we can focus on improving in the next year.

As you may have noticed, Circles™ of Harvey County has changed its name to Circles™ of Hope, with the idea that a different name could reflect our hopes and goals and not be limited to a location. Using this new name, full-color informational brochures have been developed and printed. These will be a great tool to educate the community and recruit par-



ticipants and volunteers. If you have interest in helping us share the "good news" about Circles, please stop by and talk to us about these resources.

It was exciting to see another **Getting Ahead class** beginning on September 7! (Getting Ahead is a 15-week co-investigation of poverty, including the development of a family-specific plan to improve resources.) It is a full class with 12 persons enrolled. Facilitating the class again are Denise Rhoades and Greg Meyers, and joining them this time is Denise's husband Marc. Their leadership is appreciated. Current Circle Leaders (past Getting Ahead grads) and their Allies continue to meet on Tuesday evenings for a meal and education. Eating together is an important part of the evening and volunteers to plan/prepare meals are always appreciated. The Big View team planned a special meeting open to the public at the end of September regarding landlord and tenant issues, which continues to be a significant focus for the year.

Networking Across Class Lines

by Stan Bohn

When a person is in the dilemma of paying the light bill vs. buying family food...or is a failed transmission away from being unable to get to work and losing a needed job, what can be done? Middle class folks have networks they use for problems like when a child is sick, and they have to get to work. Often minimum-wage single parents don't have that support. In Newton we "Allies" try to be that network instead of blaming the poor.

Allies are not to provide money or impose goals. We are part of Circles™ movement that links three middle-class Allies with a family in poverty. We try to be supportive as she or he decides goals and makes plans. But the biggest effect in being an Ally to a low-income single parent is what happens in us middle class know-it-all advice givers. Attitudes about our own spending change. We learn how important it is to just to be with someone. We learn to see people in need not as energy drains but as persons, more like Mother Teresa's way of seeing Christ in others.



Circle leader Linda Drake with Allies Stan Bohn and Carola Ratzlaff

When Gandhi said poverty was the worst form of violence he may have meant children starving, or desperate people joining terrorists. But maybe he was thinking of what happens to souls of those whose culture uses greed as motivation...or what happens to souls of us who accept poverty as a necessary evil.

Whatever Gandhi was thinking he knew ending poverty in a world where nations live by a jungle ethic, often worded to sound humanitarian, is not possible. Yet he lived as if ending poverty were possible....that the wolf actually could lie down with the lamb and nations would not lift sword against nation. That kind of crazy impossibility is what we are trying to live, one family at a time.

Allies work at cooperating across social, economic, and educational barriers. That calls for risking trust and patience. Lots of it. But offering respectful friendship becomes soul healing for those of us who are well-off.

If you want peace: Consider Music

Fourth of four columns for Peace Connections by Muriel T. Stackley.

Stories abound. Music can play an important part in bringing peace, in changing conflict, in diluting tension. One example is an organization called "Seeds of Peace." Israeli and Palestinian leaders bring approximately a dozen Palestinian and Israeli young people together for two weeks of camping, sometimes in beauty spots in northeast United States. The teens learn to know each other. As in any good camping curriculum, songs are important, and bind they the campers together for the rest of their lives.

Another example: American poet William Stafford, in *Every War Has Two Losers*, tells about the Welsh people hiding in tunnels that they dug for protection from bombing. "They would sing in the tunnels," says Stafford. "No one outside could hear them. Their songs never silenced a plane. But in that rich darkness their music sounded so pure that a diamond formed in the soul."

Other examples are in the immigrant stories of Paraguay. Records show how the hymns of the church--often "chorales," usually four-part and a cappella--were the mortar that brought the community together, that kept the fragmented community together.

My favorite story (heartbreaking as it is) comes out of the Mennonite experience in Russia during the revolution of the early 20th Century. Elizabeth Unger Buhler was in her late teens when the anarchists came to farms after World War One, often where they had been employed by Mennonite farmers. "Rape and pillage" was literal. Many Canadian families, including Elizabeth's, have horrific accounts of how the men were shot point blank, taken to labor camps, "disappeared." When the bandits came to Elizabeth's home, she was soon surrounded by the bodies of several family members. In desperation, she "picked up a guitar and began singing until the commander ordered his men to leave and not steal anything" (from reports in the Winnipeg Free Press and the 22 February 2010 issue of Canadian Mennonite.) We can be forgiven for filling in some imagined details. What might Elizabeth have sung? How did she survive psychologically? How did she get to Canada? ...There are folks among us who have actual details in their memory. (Perhaps Peace Connections can facilitate bringing together some more stories.)

I would like to end this series of our columns with the words of Susan Mark Landis: Holy One, help us to "put legs to our prayers, deeds to our words, and actions to our intentions" in our work for peace. Amen.

Muriel was director of the Newton Area Peace Center from 1992-1995.

Visit www.playingforchange.org – an organization dedicated to changing the world through music!

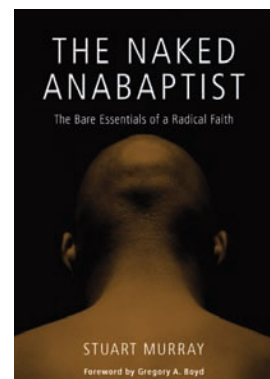
Book Review: The Naked Anabaptist

by Arnita Haury

The Naked Anabaptist, The Bare Essentials of a Radical Faith, by Stuart Murray, is an interesting, fun-to-read, and challenging book. The author, a British scholar and leader in an Anabaptist Network, writes about the Anabaptist way of being Christian, without the denominational or ethnic traditions many of us grew up with. He maintains that Anabaptism has great relevance at this time with churches and Christians struggling through change in a post-Christendom era.

Once we believe in Jesus as our Lord and Savior, what then? Murray points out a strong emphasis of Anabaptism is following Jesus as teacher as well as worshiping Him. He identifies core convictions of Anabaptism involving Jesus being the central reference point for our faith, lifestyle, and our approach to understanding the Bible. Being a disciple and witness means rejecting the lure of wealth and power. It means committing our lives to pursuing justice, community, non-violence, and understanding that peace is at the heart of the gospel.

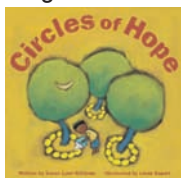
Perhaps you grew up in a church of Anabaptist heritage and would enjoy reading about Anabaptism from this perspective. Or, perhaps you know very little about Anabaptism and would like to learn about it. Perhaps you are a member of a group that has decided to study this book. Whatever your reason for looking into *The Naked Anabaptist*, you will enjoy and be challenged by it.



BOOK & GIFT SHOP

New Books

Circles of Hope by Karen Lynn Williams. Young Facile wants to plant a tree in honor of his new baby sister, but he faces many obstacles...the first seed is eaten by a goat. In this story of determination, faith, and love, author Karen Lynn Williams introduces readers to the realities of rural life in the mountains of Haiti. **\$16**



The Naked Anabaptist by Stuart Murray. Anabaptist Christians have been around for almost 500 years. But what does Anabaptism look like when not clothed in Mennonite or Amish traditions? Writing from Great Britain, Stuart Murray peels back the layers to reveal the core components of Anabaptism—and what they mean for faith in his context and ours. It's a way of following Jesus that challenges, disturbs, and inspires us, summoning us to wholehearted discipleship and worship. Read this book, and catch a vision for living a life of radical faith! **\$13.99** (See review on p. 4.)

Chat Packs – *the little boxes that have everyone talking!*

Chat Pack contains 156 cards, each featuring a question that's sure to get creative juices and fun conversations going. Great for car trips, mealtime, family gatherings, business meetings, classroom activities, fun with friends, etc. Comes in Original Chat Pack, Chat Pack for Kids, Chat Pack Stories, and Christmas Chat Pack. **\$9.95**



2011 calendars coming soon!

Year after year the **Peace Calendar** makes visible and helps legitimize several of the thousands of grassroots struggles for justice that occur daily around the world. Topics include: "Freedom Riders" 50th anniversary; the 100th anniversary of International Women's Day; a tribute to progressive hip hop; and a moving photograph of Afghan children being schooled on unexploded munitions. Full color, 14"x22" - **\$13.95**



Awakening...a mindful calendar for 2011 – Increasing number of humans are awakening to the critical needs of the Earth and all her inhabitants...to the transformative potential within each individual, to responsibility, to leadership, to an understanding of our oneness and mutuality. New "daily actions" offer specific challenges and growth possibilities. Published by the Ministry of the Arts. Color, 11"x11"- **\$12.95**. Monthly Planner also available for **\$15.95**.



The Dream of Peace – **2011 Cat Lovers Against the BOMB** – For the cat lover in your life who is also committed to peace. With terrific photos every month, plus tidbits of world history almost every day and great quotes about peace and social justice, this calendar is the purrrrrfect for the home or office. The calendar supports Nebraskans for Peace. Black and white, 8½"x 11" **\$8.95**



With art and poetry by 30 women, the **Women Artists Datebook** testifies to the beauty and fullness of contemporary women's lives. This special edition of the datebook features women artists taking women as their subject as we celebrate the 100th anniversary of International Women's Day. Spiral-bound w/ smudge-free stock. Full color and black/white art. 5"x7" - **\$13.95**



Need INK for your printer?

Peace Connections is the location for you to purchase re-manufactured ink cartridges. We work in partnership with Victor Peterson of IIINK and are a retail outlet for their products. Stop by and give us a try when your next cartridge runs out!



Christmas is coming...give a gift that expresses peace and supports Peace Connections! We have ideas for...

- Babies & Children: *stocking stuffers, picture books*
- Teens: *"Advice from" t-shirts, bookmarks, bumper stickers*
- Women: *jewelry, figurines, candles*
- Men: *windmills, CDs, "Advice from" sweatshirts*
- Anyone: *therapeutic pillows, wind chimes, gift of a tree, calendars, books*

Can't decide? Give a **gift certificate** in the amount of your choice from Peace Connections.

Also see our selection of **Christmas cards** and **picture books** – many wonderful messages of peace!

FALL CALENDAR

OCTOBER

Circles™ of Hope community meetings are being held on **Tuesdays**, 6:30 -8 pm at the First United Methodist Church. The first Tuesday of each month features an educational topic, and the fourth Tuesday is the Big View meeting, which explores and works on barriers that keep people right here in Harvey County from having enough resources. (The second Tuesday is reserved for Ally and Circle Leader meetings and the third Tuesday is reserved for the Guiding Coalition meeting.)

No Board meeting in October due to a CCSR training in late September.

Stop by the Peace Connections booth at the **Bethel College Fall Festival**, Saturday, **October 9**, 9-3 pm. We will be located outside of the Fine Arts center and offer information and a sampling of store products. A great time to pick up your sweatshirt order if you placed one in Sept.! (We will not have a booth at Taste of Newton this year, but the store will be open that evening.)

International Eradication of Poverty Day is **October 17**. Visit www.un.org/Depts/dhl/poverty/index.html for more info./resources regarding this day set aside to end poverty. Celebrate this idea at Ten Thousand Villages by making a purchase – on Friday, Oct. 17, 10 am – 5:30 pm a percentage of sales goes towards Circles™ of Hope!

Circle™ Ally Training will be held on Saturday, **Oct. 30**, 8:30 am – 4 pm. Allies offer friendship and support to Circle™ Leaders. Come to explore and learn more about what being an Ally is – no commitment required. We need 36 new allies by Jan. 2011! (A **repeat** session will be held on Nov. 20.)

Come & get a sugarless stamp at Peace Connections during the annual downtown **Halloween Walk** on Saturday, **October 30**, 5-6:30 pm.

NOVEMBER

Circles community meetings will be held on **Tuesdays**, 6:30-8 pm at the First United Methodist Church. See info. under October.

Peace Connections Board meeting will be **November 4**, 7 pm. Meetings are open to the public.

Experience the **Taste of Christmas in downtown Newton** on **Thurs., November 11, 10 am- 8 pm, Fri., November 12, 10 am – 5:30 pm & Sat., November 13, 10 am – 5:30 pm**. Stop by Peace Connections to see our Christmas specials and sample our refreshments.

Community Poverty Simulation will be held on Sunday afternoon, **November 14**, at Faith Mennonite Church, Newton. Everyone is welcome to attend.

Weekend Vigil for the School of Americas (SOA) will be held **November 19-21**. Keep participants in your thoughts and prayers.

Circle™ Ally Training will be held on Saturday, **Nov. 20**, 8:30 am – 4 pm. See info. under October.

DECEMBER

Circles community meetings will be held on **Tuesdays**, 6:30-8 pm at the First United Methodist Church. See info. under October.

No Board meeting in December due to our donor/volunteer appreciation dinner.

We hope to have the Peace Connections **Gift Shop open late until 8 pm on Thursdays** throughout December (need to line up volunteers to do so). Stop by on **December 2, 9, 16, or 23** to find gifts that reflect peace for those on your list!

Giving Garden



About 500 pounds of produce has been grown this season. Although this amount is less than last year's, the sweet potatoes are looking great, and have yet to be harvested.

This year the Garden included flowers as part of KSU test plot for the Prairie Star Flower program. Prairie Star flowers are "the best of the best, flowers that grow like crazy and bloom like crazy under lazy gardener care." Visit <http://www.prairiestarflowers.com/prairiestarlist.htm> for pictures and information on the various Prairie Star flowers



We are grateful to the following people for their gift of time during July, August & September, 2010:



- ◆ Women's Mission Society of Halstead Mennonite Church for their donation to the Kid's Summer Food & Activity Program (our apologies for not including them in our donor list in the last issue)
- ◆ Sheralynn Neff, Kathy Randall, Marlene Smucker, Leann Toews, Stan Bohn, Cay Siebert, Corinne Kehrberg, Ruby Moore, Jeanette Stucky, George Dyck, Carol Hill for help on Saturdays and other times when staff was out of the office
- ◆ Those who have provided food for the Circles™ Initiative Tuesday evening gatherings
- ◆ Marilyn Helburg and Joel Ewy for time and energy spent on Giftworks
- ◆ Phonathon volunteers who made numerous calls and to Stan Bohn for his coordination efforts
- ◆ Donations from the phonathon
- ◆ Sales of re-manufactured ink cartridges continue to increase – thanks to those of you who purchased your refills here
- ◆ Muriel T. Stackley for her insightful articles for the newsletter during 2010.



The PC Board & Staff express our gratitude for the generous responses to our recent phonathon*! In answer to our call for your contributions, many of you sent donations and words of thanks. Your encouragement in the work for peace and justice matters! As we near the end of our fiscal year in December and approach a new year of challenges and opportunities ahead, we rely on your continued support to make a difference in the lives of those in our community and beyond.

(*We did not have phone numbers for everyone – please let us know if we missed you or fill out the form at the bottom of this page.)

Current Status of Peace Connections Operating Budget (as of 9/14/10, not including special programs such as Circles™.):

Income to date: \$26,057
Budget: \$49,300 - amount still needed \$21,223

To end the year with a balanced budget, Peace Connections will continue to be in need of your contributions throughout the fall. Please stop by, give us a call, send us a note, or donate on line through our website! Shopping at the PC gift shop also helps Peace Connections – be sure to see what we have for you or for those on your gift lists!

On-line donations are welcome! Just visit our website at www.peaceconnections.org and click on the donate button on our welcome page. Donate with your credit card through our PayPal account.



Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Donation to Annual Budget: \$ _____

Donation to Endowment Fund: \$ _____

Donation of time: _____



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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

If you wish to discontinue receiving this newsletter,
check here () and place in return mail.

Vision: Thriving communities sustained by social justice and compassion.

Hope

Our mission is plant ourselves at the gates of hope – not the prudent gates of Optimism, which are somewhat narrower; not the stalwart, boring gates of Common Sense; nor the strident gates of Self-Righteousness, which creak on shrill and angry hinges (people cannot hear us there; they cannot pass through); nor the cheerful, flimsy garden gate of “Everything is Gonna Be All Right.” But a different, sometimes lonely place, of truth-telling about your own soul first of all and its condition, the place of resistance and defiance, from which you see the world, both as it is and as it could be, as it will be; the place from which you glimpse not only struggle but joy in the struggle. And we stand there, becoming and calling, telling people what we’re seeing, asking them what they see.

-Victoria Safford

Mission:

Peace Connections partners with others to:

- ▶ **build resources within families and communities**
- ▶ **teach and practice nonviolence**
- ▶ **nurture personal and spiritual well-being**

This newsletter is published four times per year by Peace Connections, an ecumenical non-profit.

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The Board of Directors meets monthly at 612 N. Main, Newton, KS. Meetings are open to the public.