

Effective efforts in 2013... Inspiring us in 2014...

LPF 2013 Annual Report

We are deeply encouraged by all the ways Lutheran Peace Fellowship members around the US have **acted** – and **supported** one another – for peace & justice in 2013. It has brought **progress** in most of our **core issue areas**. For example:

2013 saw **conflicts rage** in a dozen nations from Syria to Afghanistan and **diplomacy** on issues like Iran's nuclear program. These are 3 examples in which – **working with other groups** – LPF **advocacy** helped to achieve positive **results**.

Also working **collaboratively**, we were able to make **progress** on another top LPF priority – getting Congress to lessen the growth of **military spending** rather than cut already inadequate **safety net programs**. Serious cuts in **defense spending** are urgently needed to free up funding needed to create **jobs**, halt **climate change**, grow **renewable energy**, etc.

Violence against women – from India to the US military – was again on the front pages. In both of those settings, an **outpouring of public outrage** and organizing led to some **measurable gains**.

The lack of any progress in Congress on **gun control** has **frustrated** those who were moved to action by the tragic **Newtown** school shootings a year ago; which shows the power of **well-funded lobbies** to foil the most sensible changes unless we can match all that money with **effective organizing**.

Nonviolence education is a priority that was at the heart of LPF forums on **The Biblical Basis of Peacemaking**, **Nonviolence in the Real World**, **How to Be a Bridge** in a World of Walls, **Leadership Training** for peace, **Hunger program** volunteer support...

We produced **resources** and **advocacy alerts** in all the above priority issue areas. A notable example: we updated our widely-used, interactive computer activity on **budget priorities**. Group leaders across the US called it “very **effective**,” “unusually **creative**,” “**one of the best** forums this year.” (It is available on LPF's website, as a CD, and should soon work in a browser.)



A nation that continues, year after year, to spend more money on military defense than on programs of social uplift is approaching spiritual death." MLK, *Where Do We Go From Here?*

LPF **Women's Initiative** offers resources to encourage peace & justice efforts for and with women. Our action guide “**Stopping Violence Against Women and Girls**” is now available, as well as the “**Women's Path of Hope**,” a timeline of women's action for peace & justice **throughout history** and around the world.

Coming soon: the new “**Nurturing Peace: Gifts of Women**” action guide, “**Women's Peace Video Gallery**,” and “**Inspiration from Women**”.... all under the expert leadership of Lily Wu.

We posted over thirty **blog updates** in 2013, sharing over 100 videos, resources and links – thanks especially to board chair and blogger, **Alan Forsberg**. As webmaster, his upgrades of our **website** have made it far more attractive, dynamic, and user-friendly: take a look! More is on the way!

finances: 2013 was another **tight budget year** for us – as for most nonprofits. Many members had to **limit donations** due to salary or retirement cuts.... Bruce Radtke, Alice McCain, and Andrea Langland **worked overtime** on member support. Our matching campaign helped, some members gave welcome **extra** donations, but the weakness in **grants** still hurt.

We made spending cuts where we could and extended a drastic **salary reduction**, which enabled us to **reduce expenses** to \$36,470, our lowest in 20 years. In fact, we managed to attain our first **budget surplus** in 5 years.

Such stresses have served to draw us back to our **focus**: helping Lutherans pursue the **gospel call** to be peacemakers and justice seekers, including taking on **deeper** concerns like militarism. We invite you to help – by **speaking** with friends and co-workers, **sharing updates** and resources, **joining** with others in **advocacy** and action, **encouraging congregations** to sponsor **forums** and **peace and justice groups** to strengthen participant insight and skill in their peacemaking.... We are here to **support** your efforts. Know those efforts are greatly valued – and needed!

Blessings and Peace to you and yours in 2014!