

Worship and Action Update, 1/10/03

Dear Friends in New York Yearly Meeting:

Watching, waiting or acting, walking or sitting, we are moving toward new adventures, into new times and new experience. Friends near and far have much planned for the coming weeks in the causes of peace. We share news of just a few of the many recent and upcoming events and activities:

The training program for counselors on conscience and war (a/k/a Draft Counseling) organized by Purchase Quarter went forward last Saturday, January 4, despite adverse weather. 32 participants from 11 Monthly Meetings gathered with Bill Galvin for a day-long program on the requirements of the current military registration program, penalties for failing to register, and the manner in which a re-instituted draft would work, including the conscientious objector application and alternative service programs. Another 13 enrollees were unable to attend because of the weather, but hope to organize a training session in the Spring, perhaps in the Ithaca area.

In recent Updates, we reported on efforts to assist immigrants of Arab or Muslim background who are being harassed through the Immigration and Naturalization Service's program of forced registration. Syracuse Friends Meeting reports that it held a discussion of immigration law on Jan 5 with Diane Chappell-Daly, a local immigration attorney. She spoke about recent developments in immigration law and urged Friends to take note of the January 10 deadline for immigrant reporting (discussed in last week's Update).

Friends from Brooklyn Meeting advise that there a demonstration in protest of this "Special Registration." being held at the INS Headquarters in Manhattan on the afternoon of January 10, today, followed by a meeting Friday evening sponsored by Justice for Detainees at the Brooklyn Society for Ethical Culture with speakers who will discuss the "Special Registration" and its implications. We hope to be able to provide a report next week.

Many events in memory of Martin Luther King, Jr. and his uncompromising stands for nonviolence and equality will be taking place in the coming weeks. These are a few:

On Thursday, January 16, the Pleasantville (Westchester County) Faith Community will host a community celebration of the life and witness of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. at 7:30 P.M., at Holy Innocents Church in Pleasantville. The keynote speaker will be the Rev. Richard Deats, editor of the journal *Fellowship*, published by the Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR) .

In Albany, the Capital District for Justice & Peace is holding a Candlelight Peace March on Friday, January 17 from 4:30 P.M. to begin a weekend of celebrating Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s message of peace. The march will leave from the NY State Capitol at 4:30 P.M. (assemble at 4:15 P.M. at the east steps (Eagle St./Washington Ave) and will end with a rally in Townsend Park (Henry Johnson Blvd./Central Ave.).

In New York City, an Upper West Side Interfaith Walk for Peace in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr., with speakers will be held on Monday, January 20 at 3:00 P.M. The event will be followed by lobbying efforts to Senators Clinton and Schumer.

A Martin Luther King Day Service in Washington, D.C. focusing on the connection between war and poverty is being organized by the National Council of Churches, the Episcopal Diocese of Washington, the Children's Defense Fund and others for Monday, January 20, 2:30-4 P.M. at The Cathedral of St. Peter and St. Paul (Washington National Cathedral), Massachusetts and Wisconsin Ave, NW. There will be a procession to the White House and prayer vigil following the service . More information is available at <http://www.sojo.net>.

An extensive listing of planned activities for peace throughout the nation over the next weeks can be found at: <http://www.unitedforpeace.org/calendar.php>.

The FWCC Peace Consultation at Guilford College in North Carolina will take place Friday, January 17 through Monday, January 20. Fred Dettmer, Paddy Lane, Eric Snare and Sarah Mandolang have been named by the Yearly Meeting to attend on our behalf. A number of other New York Yearly Meeting Friends will be traveling to the Consultation as well. Friends throughout the Yearly Meeting are invited to hold this important gathering and all those attending in the Light. In this way we may all participate in the deep work of peacemaking to which we are called. A report on the conference will be included in a future Update.

Friends Committee on National Legislation and others are organizing a "grassroots" lobby day to stop the war on Iraq for Tuesday, January 21. Groups of concerned citizens will be meeting with members of Congress in their local offices across the country to ask them to help pull our nation back from the brink of war. As Congress will be in recess that week, most members will be home in their districts. To find out more go to <http://www.fcnl.org/nationallobby.htm>. You can register to participate in a meeting in your area through MoveOn at: <http://www.moveon.org/inspectionsmeetings/>.

Peaceable Greetings,

Linda Chidsey, Vicki Cooley, Fred Dettmer
NYYM Worship & Action working group

"We are challenged to rid our nation and the world of poverty....
We must find an alternative to war and bloodshed....
It is no longer a choice, my friends, between violence and nonviolence.
It is either nonviolence or non existence...and the alternative
to strengthening the United Nations and thereby disarming the whole world
may well be a civilization plunged into the abyss of annihilation...."

--Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., speaking at the
Washington National Cathedral, March 31, 1968.

“Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that.
Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.”

- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Strength to Love, 1963