



The Peacekeepers

Association for Ministry to Military Personnel Newsletter

March/April 2014

TIM'S SERVICE

by Tim "K9" Kunzweiler, President

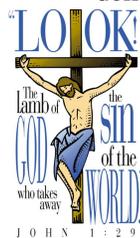
I want to take a special moment to share some reminders for how current military members and veterans are remembered and cared for, far and wide. These are U.S. examples but we'd also be pleased to hear examples from any of our international readers.

1. Early in March I took a short trip to an indoor shopping center in Kettering, Ohio, and spotted a section being used by the Blue Star Mothers of Miami Valley Chapter #3. They are mothers who have, or have had, children honorably serving in the U.S. military, Guard, Reserve or who are honorably or medically discharged Veterans. Their Mission Statement: "While promoting patriotism, the Miami Valley Chapter of the Blue Star Mothers of America, Inc. (OH 3), supports our troops all over the world, our veterans, and each other." One of their projects appears to be sending care packages to military members who might not have regular support from other sources.
2. I've encountered numerous congregations that keep reminders in their bulletin announcements of requesting prayers for service members, their families and friends. I received my most recent reminder this morning, while fellowshipping with the Lancaster, Ohio congregation, where Sheila was speaking.



3. Community memorials and sites honoring veterans. I often pass one such site at the Veterans Memorial Park at 1911 N. Fairfield Rd, Beavercreek, OH. This is a triangular park hosting a tall column with globe and eagle atop as the centerpiece of this memorial. Three flags are featured at the column, and a star, filled with names of Beavercreek veterans, covers the ground. A sidewalk with additional names continues through the park to the gazebo and passes historical markers remembering many of our wars. Services are held each Memorial Day and Veterans Day at 2:00 p.m.

As we prepare for Easter let us embrace the season with hope, and with a confidence in ultimate victory. The message of Christ is one of true hope for the world. The Resurrection already proclaims a final victory over sin and death. A day of real celebration will be when all the earth may willingly seek to embrace its Lord. Will that day come soon? Let us do more than just hope. Let us be instruments for Christ, even when the world's political climate might make all of us feel that *bearing the burden of peacekeeping* will remain our task for a while longer. While reading through some of the delightful hymns in the new Community of Christ Singing hymnal I came across #321 "Gonna Lay Down My Sword and Shield." A prominent line from the song goes "I ain't gonna study war no more." As peacekeepers I believe this would be a worthy hope for all of us. Can we share the message of Christ even as we fight? Our struggle is not confined to a field of battle. It starts within. If we seek the peace of Christ within ourselves then I believe we can be best prepared to share the same peace in our daily walk. The person beside you struggles. Will you



The Community of Christ Association for Ministry to Military Personnel is dedicated to bringing ministry to Community of Christ members serving on active duty world-wide.

help with the burden? Will you bring hope? Will you help one more soul achieve victory? My prayer is that you will be successful in this, OUR mission.

In Christ ó Victory! May God bless all Peacekeepers.

Tim öK9ö Kunzweiler, President.



Reminders:

Dues run through April of each year. Check your label to see the year that your expires.

Also: Community of Christ Chaplain Seth Bryant has an article in the January 2014 *Herald* titled Receiving Peace from a Turtle. Congratulations Seth!

Kid's Stuff by Mary Yocum

What a joy it is to spend so much time with my precious grandchildren! Donø brother gave him a cap when Dominic was born that says, öIf weød known grandchildren were so much fun, weød have had them first!ö Boy is that right.



Ian has started saying, öHi sugar,ö and öBye sugar.ö His two year old pronunciation sounds more like öSooger,ö but we think that makes it charming.

Big brother takes real good care of Ian too. I donø know if Iøve already shared the source of Dominicø name before. His Dad was in a park as a teenager, and drunk. He had passed out and then began to regurgitate. Not realizing that he could aspirate and die his friends just laughed.

Across the park came a young man who knew enough to turn Richard over and call an ambulance. All Richard ever learned about the young man was his name and that he was leaving town the next morning. Dominic enjoys the story of how he is named after the man who saved his Dadø life.

We frequently have both boys spend the night on Fridays and take them to movies or whatever the next day. Recently, after putting Ian down for the night, Dominic rushed into my bedroom to announce that Ian was throwing up. I went in there to find that he wasnø just spitting up a little ó as I had suspected ó he was projectile vomiting to the point where he was in danger of aspirating ó like Dominicø Dad.

Later I explained to Dominic that he was my hero ó that he had saved his brotherø life just as the unknown Dominic had saved his Dadø life.

For a little boy with ADHD, and low self-esteem, this was quite a boost.

Grace and Peace, Part 1 by Lu Moutenay of Independence, Missouri, USA

*Above all else, strive to be faithful to Christ's vision of the peaceable Kingdom of God on earth. **Courageously challenge cultural, political, and religious trends that are contrary to the reconciling and restoring purposes of God. Pursue peace.***

—*Doctrine and Covenants 163: 3b*

I started to have second thoughtsö fearful thoughts. Do I really want to do this? The other peaceful protesters extended grace to me even before the imminent event.

öNow, if you change your mind at the last minute, Lu, no one will hold it against you í no one will think any less of you.ö It must be like that with the grace of God, who loves unconditionally. God forgives, even if we fail to do what we know we must.



As I faced the line of öpeaceö officers, I felt my knees go weak. I said a fast and silent prayer for courage. Immediately a peaceful spirit washed over me. So I declined to step back across the private-property line marked by the forbidding sign. After the third warning, the police arrested me and three others for criminal trespass.

Having a nuclear weapons parts plant in Kansas City was unthinkable to us. Thirty-five people came to protest with much forethought. We trained in non-violent resistance with *Pace e Bene* (Peace and Doing Good). They came from White Rose Catholic Worker House in Chicago, Illinois. We committed to the stance.

The officers were respectful and seemed sympathetic to our cause. They cuffed my wrists behind my back loosely. I guess they didnø think of me as a flight risk (smile). Steel mesh separated me from my compatriots in the police van.

So many unknowns lay ahead of me. At the police station they took mug shots. öFace front, face right, face left.ö Next step: fingerprinting. They emptied my pockets and removed the laces from my shoes. They took the cross from around my neck! The officer said, öFollow me,ö and before I knew it, the steel doors closed behind me.

How did I come to make this choice? I had *thought* about the weapons plant—unwise, I thought—to assemble even more nuclear weapons. I *read* about how dangerous it was. I *wrote* about it for the PeaceWorks® KC newsletter, and *ye, prayed* about it. Now it was time to *work toward* peace physically. Time to *act* on it!

I knew this would mean a new police record, but if my grandchildren understood I was doing it for them, which they did, I knew my community would, too. If I chose to pursue peace, I had to choose this action. I felt the assurance by God's presence.

Grace and Generosity, Part 2 by Lu Mountenay of Independence, Missouri, USA

If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it. Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.
—I Corinthians 12: 26 – 27

The city charged us with criminal trespass for protesting at the nuclear weapons plant. My home for the next few hours was a concrete-and-steel jail cell in downtown Kansas City. I sat on a graffiti-covered metal bench to gather my thoughts. I noticed someone had scratched "MAMA" in the blue paint. I saw it as a lonely, regretful cry for help.



"How much is your bail?" an inmate asked. "One hundred dollars," I answered. "That's nothing! Do you have someone to pay it?" I had faith in my family support and companion protesters from PeaceWorks® KC. However, I felt the other women in the cell might be alone in their troubles. As I got to know them, it was worse than I had imagined.

When "Stacey" learned I was a minister, she immediately asked, "Will you pray for me?" We prayed together as she cried. I found that poverty was at the root of her crime. She had broken her probation because she couldn't pay the fine for bad checks she had written for groceries. "I was in hiding. My boyfriend found me and beat me up. The police arrested *me*—not my boyfriend—because of the warrant on me. I miss my kids."

"Flo" was homeless and had been drinking. As I started to walk around the cell to stretch my legs, she followed me. I did a few arm-swinging exercises. She did the same. Soon, everyone joined in, and we had an aerobics class going on. They simply longed for a little direction, a break from boredom and hopelessness, if only for a few hours.

One woman, locked in a separate cell, moaned and yelled continually. "She's violent," Stephanie said. I started to sing, and the woman became quiet. Then Stacey, Stephanie, Flo, and Mary started singing, too. Flo asked, "Do you know *Swing Low, Sweet Chariot?*"

"Sure do." And so all of us sang. The atmosphere started to get a little sad, so to cheer them up, I started to sing alternate words: "Wing low, sweet Cadillac—a brand new El Dorado coming after me!" Everyone laughed. The officers had not responded to the cries of the woman and her calls for help, but one *did* come when he heard us laughing. Interesting!

When they came to release me, everyone started crying again, so we had another prayer. They had surely blessed me with their sincerity and genuine emotions. They taught me about gratitude and humility. I think of my cell mates often and pray they open themselves to receive comfort from the Holy Spirit. I pray they have someone to lead them in dance, song, and prayer; someone to call friend; and yes—someone to pay their bail.

Engaged vs Busy by Jennifer Redfern

Last year during our adult class at the Greater Pacific Northwest Mission Center family reunion, a point was made about the word Busy. What does busy really mean? Is it just a word to avoid answering a question such as hello, what have you been up to? What other word could be used more effectively to answer such a question? As I pondered that question, I realized as disciples of Christ we are not "busy" but rather engaged in carrying out the Mission of Jesus Christ. As a Peacekeeper, I have been very quiet. So let me share a little of my daily walk.

Upon my retirement from the US Army in 2010 I executed a plan to ensure I did not just sit around and do nothing, becoming bored or depressed. I threw myself into a flurry of activity beginning with helping at family reunion, serving as a camp counselor for our teenage youth camp, and volunteered as a Washington State Master Gardener. As fall approached, our congregation agreed to be a host church for the local Freezing Nights homeless outreach program. We opened our doors one night a week to provide food and shelter for our single adult homeless population during the winter months. It was in this ministry that I identified with Christ's mission in action. Amongst our guests were several military veterans trying to transition into civilian life while coping with a lack of skills; PTSD among other issues. I know each of you can identify with these issues and reaching out to our fellow veterans as well. I found a special bond with them.

It was with great sadness that our congregation had to end our involvement in the Freezing Nights ministry. We could not provide sufficient number of volunteers and our church building was too small to meet the increasing population. However we found we could serve this population in a new way. We began Amity, a ministry providing lunch and a quiet space off the streets two days a week. Community resource counselors are provided a space to meet with our guests to assess their needs and help with treatment, training, and housing.



It gives me great pleasure to serve this community, to serve with church leaders representing many faith movements, all of us working towards abolishing poverty, uplifting the worth of all persons and sharing in the joys and sadness that come with being a large family. I frequently feel dizzy with the flurry of activity. There are not enough hours in the day to meet all needs but I have managed to share my hobbies with this group and learn from them as well. Amongst our guests are former farm kids who know a thing or two about gardening; a few animal lovers who have helped me on my journey to train a dog for conformation shows; some who are very handy in the kitchen and even a plumber. My little show dog provides companionship for several of our guests. The piano in our sanctuary provides much needed therapy for a military veteran coping with PTSD. It is such a joy to see how he transforms as he plays the most beautiful music. The piano is his sanctuary. Our lunch program not only helps our homeless and low income

population, but also provides a sense of purpose for several of our more senior Community of Christ members. Cooking, cleaning, visiting are only a few of many ways they serve. We visit our guests when they are in the hospital, join them in celebrations of sobriety, housing, employment or birthdays. And they reciprocate with cards expressing thanks ó birthday greetings ó get well wishes. Our Amity guests can be a blessing. Some of them truly were this past week. I expressed frustration with my nervousness in the dog show ring and how it affected my dog. I received tips on meditation, visualization, even tapping an emotional freedom technique. I could hear their voices as I entered the show ring. And before I knew it, my little German Pinscher was awarded Best of Breed. The camaraderie amongst this group is comparable to that which I enjoyed on active duty.

Someone commented recently that they did not see how their congregation could set up a program like that of our congregation because they did not have enough people. My response ó if you are blessed with free time and have a desire to serve the community outside your doors ó stop and visit with someone at the local food bank, clothing bank, or soup kitchen. You will find there is a need for you. There is a place for each and everyone to serve in mission. It is a blessing to be engaged in mission. It is my prayer that the next time someone asks how you are doing or what have you been up to, your response will be that you are engaged in or involved in í and share your story of your walk with the Saviour.

Available in an E-mail and a “snail mail” edition. Active-duty military members who join the association can receive either edition for free. Non-active-duty sustaining members receive either edition with a paid Association membership; those dues are **\$10.00/yr, due in April (multi-year discounts available)**. Archive newsletters also available on our Web site: <http://www.cofchristpeacekeepers.org/>

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