

PEACE ON EARTH – FROM DREAMS TO DIALOGUE

Jane Ozanne

I have often wondered what it is that draws me to work for peace with Jerusalem Peacemakers. Since childhood the messianic title ‘Prince of peace’ has spoken deeply to my soul. Christmas is approaching, the angels once more herald ‘Peace on Earth, Goodwill to All’ and remind me that it is this prophetic dream which deeply energises my life: the dream that one day all things may be brought together in unity, as Paul’s vision in his letters to The Ephesians and Colossians suggests.

So the dream of peace is enabling and energising, but why do I work specifically with Jerusalem Peacemakers, amongst the many groups working for peace? There are many answers to this question but the one which occupies my imagination at present also has much to do with the power of dreams.

Picture this scene: noisy crowds are thronging the streets of Jerusalem to celebrate one of the most important days of Ramadan; security is tight and tensions high. Many people turn back unable to make it to their destination, but one Jewish peacemaker somehow stays his course through the thronging intensity and arrives at a Palestinian hotel in East Jerusalem to talk to a visiting group about spiritual peacemaking. He speaks, fielding questions about the separation wall. Not denying its present reality, he focuses on a future possibility that one day the concrete from the wall will be used to build a pier which Arabs and Israeli’s will enjoy together in peace; an extraordinary light seems to shine, the light of an illuminating and empowering dream. It is this emphasis on envisioning how things might be and working tirelessly towards the positive which underpins the work of Jerusalem Peacemakers, a kind of spiritual alchemy which calls into being a field of hope and possibility, which I believe can summon a new future.

The co-directors of Jerusalem Peacemakers will be visiting the UK this Autumn. Below I will highlight the nature of the work and elucidate some other principles of this particular way of working. Many of the principles are ones which I see expressed within CANA, which probably has something to do with why CANA has been such an important and nourishing group for me!

“JERUSALEM PEACEMAKERS” is a circle of independent, grassroots spiritual peacemakers and projects working together in peace in The Holy Land.

JERUSALEM PEACEMAKERS UK exists to:-

Support the work of the peacemakers in The Holy Land.

- Create forums for spiritual peacemaking in The UK, building bridges between Jews, Christians, Muslims and others - empowering them through the connection with peacemakers in The Holy Land.
- Highlight and publicise the positive work of the Jerusalem Peacemakers in The Holy Land, in **dialogue** and **reconciliation**.
- Raise awareness of the importance and strength of grassroots positive and peaceful interaction at home and abroad.

“TO PLANT PEACE IN EVERY SEASON”

This is the challenge, commitment and vision of Jerusalem Peacemakers as a whole and individually. Key qualities of this growing and evolving group are:

- Co-operation: The emphasis is on teamwork co-operation, and networking with a desire to live out and model the change we wish to see. The strength of working together is recognised.
- Inclusiveness: Jerusalem Peacemakers includes people from a wide range of religious backgrounds or none, who seek to bring spiritual principles to living out and working in and for peace.
- Trust: This includes the importance of valuing each person’s contribution as well as honouring and being enriched by differences.

- Heart-centred approach: The value of meeting at the level of the heart is of paramount importance, together with recognition of the sacred within all life and attunement to this sense of the sacred.
- Hope: Maintaining a sense of hope and bringing this hope to others is fundamental to enabling and encouraging work for peace in a situation where people often feel helpless.
- Shared spiritual practice: Prayer, meditation, focussed intention, celebration and other expressions of shared spirituality are at the core of our experience together.
- Unity: Linked to a mystical approach is a belief in the interconnectedness, interdependence and underlying unity of all life.

For further information please contact:

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Details of the forthcoming UK tour please see the diary section of News and Views.