

2009 BECHTEL LECTURES

LECTURE TWO

Women Clothed with the Sun: Sophia Facing the Beast

Elaine Enns and Ched Myers

This lecture means to honor the peace and justice work of women, and we would like to begin by naming just two. One is the woman who was cleaning our room at the St. Paul's United College dorm today here in Waterloo. From El Salvador, she has lived and worked in Ontario for 17 years. We asked her how she deals with the cold weather, and she replied that it wasn't nearly as bad as all the years she worked in the refrigerated environment of a local chicken processing factory. Her husband still works in the beef slaughterhouse, she said, her pain well masked; she's glad to have "graduated" to cleaning rooms. To all the women who work invisibly in the low wage sector, may we come to know your stories.

The second woman is also close at hand, in the audience tonight: Hedy Sawadsky. The first ethnic Mennonite Ched ever met, thirty years ago, she has been a dear friend and a pioneer peacemaker. Sawadsky has ventured well beyond the safe confines of her clan to build bridges of collaboration and common witness with activists across the ecumenical spectrum. She remains active today with Christian Peacemaker Teams, and we honor her as our beloved elder, colleague, mentor, and a true peace warrior.

To these two women, a new friend and an old one, we offer as an invocation a few lines from our favorite Alice Walker poem, "While Love is Unfashionable"¹:

While love is dangerous
let us walk bareheaded
beside the Great River.
Let us gather blossoms
under fire.

In the prolegomenon to the peacemaking manifesto of Ephesians that we looked at in the first lecture, the author declares: “With all wisdom (*sophia*) and insight God has made known to us the mystery of the Divine will” (Eph. 1:8). He goes on to pray that God might grant the reader “a spirit of wisdom (*sophia*) and of revelation” to understand and embrace the abolition of enmity embodied in Christ (1:17). And as we saw, the author concludes his argument by contending that it is “through the church that the diverse wisdom (*sophia*) of God might now be made known to the Principalities and Powers in the highest places” (Eph 3:10). Three times Ephesians stresses the intimate relationship between the “mysterious” vocation of peacemaking and the spirit of *sophia*.

The image of divine Sophia as a woman is beloved in the Eastern Orthodox Church. It is celebrated in the meditations of the great medieval Catholic mystic Hildegard of Bingen. And in the last two decades, this tradition, marginalized in the western church, has been recovered by Christian feminists. But its roots go all the way back to the Hebrew Bible, where the Hebrew word *chokhmah* (like the Greek *sophia*) is feminine.

The most famous articulation is Proverbs 8-9, which portrays Wisdom as a female prophet trying to get the attention of the people of her village. Sophia urgently “takes her stand, crying out – on the heights, beside the way, at the crossroads, in front of the gates, at the entrance of the portals” (Prov. 8:2). A woman would not typically have been seen in such prominent public places in the patriarchal culture of antiquity, where women were largely sequestered at home. But Lady Wisdom’s message of justice (8:15f) breaks gender taboos in its insistence. The writer offers a cosmic rationale: Sophia’s truth not only pre-exists Creation (8:22-29) but indeed co-created the world with God (8:30f). In Proverbs 9, Sophia sets a table for a feast to which even the “simplest” are invited (9:1-5). Both images are profoundly maternal: the wise old crone demanding a hearing, and the householder offering warm, nurturing hospitality. Later, Jesus (perhaps reflecting the influence of a very strong mother) invoked this very tradition, warning skeptics resisting his message: “Wisdom (*sophia*) is justified by her children” (Luke 7:35).

Indeed, women have long held up the world, not only in their nurturing but also by fiercely protecting their children and making peace in the home, the neighborhood and beyond. In ancient Greece, Aristophanes’

comedy *Lysistrata* (which loosely translated means “she who disbands armies”) describes how the bloody, 20-year Peloponnesian War was finally halted only when the women of Athens refused to have sex with their husbands. Hostilities ceased in six days! Similarly, in the Hebrew Bible we find the extraordinary story of Abigail, who confounded David’s mission of vengeance against her husband by meeting David’s army in the field armed only with a sumptuous banquet. Impressed with her courage and creativity, he abandoned his plans for retribution (1 Sam. 25:18-20).

In indigenous cultures women have played special roles as peacemakers, intervening in conflicts and often declaring truces in war. For example, the entire Lenape clan of the Delaware Valley in Pennsylvania was appointed by the Iroquois Confederacy to play the role as mediators/peacemakers in tribal conflicts, and collectively referred to as ‘women.’ “It is not well that all nations should war; for that will finally bring about the destruction of the Indians,” goes the Lenape sacred story, the *Walam Olum*.

We have thought of a means to prevent this before it is too late.
Let one nation be The Woman. We will place her in the middle,
and the war nations shall be the Men and dwell around her. No
one shall harm the Woman.... The Woman shall not go to war,
but do her best to keep the peace. When the Men around her
fight one another, and the strife waxes hot, the Woman will have
the power to say, ‘You Men! Why do you strike one another?
Remember that your wives and children will perish if you do
not cease. Will you perish from the face of the earth?’ Then the
Men shall listen to the Woman and obey her.²

In North American history alone, the cloud of witnesses of women warriors for peace and justice is vast: from 19th-century abolitionist Harriet Tubman to 20th-century United Farm Workers co-founder Dolores Huerta; from famous Civil Rights heroine Rosa Parks to forgotten movement martyr Viola Liuzzo; and from Nora Bernard of Millbrook First Nations Reserve in Nova Scotia – instrumental in helping to launch Canada’s first Truth and Reconciliation Commission process – to recent Brazilian forest defender and martyr Sister Dorothy Stang. In 2005, a thousand women from more than 150 countries were jointly nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize, in an effort to make visible women’s work of countering injustice, discrimination,

oppression, and violence in the pursuit of peace.³ Earlier this month we celebrated International Women's Day, which has its roots in women's labor struggles dating back to 1857.

Unfortunately, women's stories have long been hidden or suppressed in the dominant patriarchal culture, forever considered secondary to the "heroic feats" of men. This is definitely a problem among Mennonites. Thus we believe it is important to underline the restorative justice and peacemaking work of women who embody both the prophetic Sophia of Proverbs and the peacemaking Sophia of Ephesians.

We rightly remember women martyrs in our Anabaptist tradition, such as Maria von Monjou. But stories of Mennonite witness lie much closer to home; for example, Elaine's great-grandmother Schultz. During the Russian revolution Nestor Makhno and his bandits were ravaging Mennonite villages in the Ukraine, murdering, raping, stealing, and demanding to be fed, clothed, and given a place to sleep. During Christmas of 1918, Makhno and his men came to great-grandma Schultz's home. The men of the house had to flee for their safety. Great-grandma, her daughters, and small children stayed in their home; she directed Makhno and his men to sleep in the best room, served them meals, and gave them clothes. But she always kept a watchful eye on her daughters and children, never leaving them alone so they would not be hurt or violated by Makhno's men. She courageously absorbed the violence of those men, trumping it by the power of hospitality. We imagine her telling them firmly, "There will be *no* violence in my house – I will not allow it!"

I

Tonight, however, we want to focus on Christian women outside our Anabaptist tradition, mentors of ours whose work we believe has a lot to teach those of us in the peace church tradition.⁴

Murphy Davis

Murphy Davis works to confront the death penalty in the United States and the cold shadow it casts over the life of the poor. For over 30 years, Davis has been a tireless advocate for the most marginalized people in North

America: those on the streets and those on “death row.” Davis (*right*) and her husband Eduard Loring are Presbyterian ministers who founded The Open Door Community (ODC) in 1981 in an old apartment building near downtown Atlanta, Georgia. Their focus is on the relationship between homelessness, prison, poverty, class, and racial segregation. Some of the community members were once homeless or in prison, while others are ministers, students, or lawyers. Daily, the ODC offers food, clothing, showers, toilets, telephone use, and shelter to those living on the streets.



In 1976, Davis set up Southern Prison Ministry (SPM) to work specifically with persons on death row and women in prison. She has made innumerable visits to Death Row, befriending hundreds of inmates and immersing herself in the struggle to abolish the death penalty. The loss of friends on death row hits her hard. In Advent of 1983, 54-year-old John Eldon Smith was the first man to be executed under the new Death Penalty law. For four years, Davis had visited him and fought for his life. She relates her first journey through that fire:

The days following the killing found our community about the tasks of burial and comforting Smitty’s family.... One week later we made a feeble effort to pick ourselves up to prepare Christmas dinner for our homeless friends. The temperatures in Atlanta suddenly fell to zero and below.... Even as we celebrated the Nativity of our Lord, twenty of our homeless sisters and brothers died in the streets and alleyways of our city... frozen stiff in dark corners, abandoned cars, vacant buildings.... Day and night we cooked hot food and fixed hot coffee and tea to take out onto the streets. We squeezed as many extra bodies into our dining room as the space would bear.... Nothing in my background as a white overeducated Christian; nothing

in my studies; nothing in my spiritual instruction or pastoral counseling – nothing had prepared me to meet with such utter failure, grief and suffering.⁵

Davis has done extensive research on the experience of incarceration, the rapid growth of the “prison-industrial complex,” and the disturbing relationship between prison expansion and the decline of affordable housing. When she began this work in 1976, fewer than 50 people were on Georgia’s death row; now that number is over one hundred. Davis is a powerful preacher and teacher who brings rigorous analysis together with compelling stories of her accompaniment work. But for all her prophetic advocacy, the heart of her work is pastoral: visiting prisoners on Death Row, listening to their stories, and advocating for them.

As the call for vengeance by political leaders and many churches has become even more insistent, and the poor more maligned, Davis relies on her faith to sustain her in the face of insurmountable loss. She related to us that:

The most important piece is to have a community, so the failures and the deep sorrow and grief are not borne alone. No individual can bare the crushing, hateful power of this system. We must build community and find a spiritual well to draw on. Our deep spiritual well is the discipleship movement of the vagrant Jesus, the dark-skinned Middle Easterner, the executed convict Jesus. That is the well that sustains us, that helps us find the resurrection that is hidden amidst so much crucifixion.

Davis is in her fourth round of battling cancer. Recently she told us of yet another friend she had accompanied on death row for many years. Before his execution he was asked if he was ready to die. He responded, “Hell, no. I want to live. I am not ready to die. But I *am* prepared.” This was a significant lesson for Davis as she faces her own fight with cancer.

In 1995, when the doctors gave me 6-8 months to live, I thought, “I don’t want to die. I want to see my daughter finish high school and become an adult. But if I have to die, I have had the best teachers, people who faced a much more cruel death.” Though facing execution, they did not sacrifice their dignity, they did

not hand over their capacity for love and forgiveness. This is what lives inside me.

For her tireless work and advocacy Davis was recently selected into Robert Shetterly's "Americans Who Tell The Truth" portrait series, joining such women as Rosa Parks and Dorothy Day (<http://www.americanswhotellthetruth.org>).

Marietta Jaeger

Marietta Jaeger's journey is marked by tragedy and agonizing grief. Yet with her moral authority as the mother of a murder victim, she challenges all of us to disarm our hearts and practice forgiveness. On June 25, 1973, Jaeger's seven-year-old daughter Susie was kidnapped during a family camping trip in Montana. For fifteen months the family knew nothing of Susie's whereabouts. Jaeger told us:



I was catapulted into a very intense, spiritual journey. Initially I was willing to kill the kidnapper with my bare hands for taking my little girl away and because of the terrible effect it had on my entire family. I made a year-long commitment to daily wrestle with God about forgiveness, justice, mercy, and love. Many people were praying for me and it was a long, gradual process. But during that year, I came to realize three things: (1) In staying full of rage I was in fact handing my power over to the kidnapper, allowing his actions to change my value system; (2) in God's eyes the kidnapper was just as precious as my little girl; and (3) if I wanted to live my Catholic faith with integrity, I was called to forgive my enemies. I eventually realized that I needed to forgive the kidnapper for the sake of myself and everyone who touched my life. And because I believe in a God who never violates our freedom or free will, I gave God permission to change my heart, and by the time we found out what happened to Susie, the miracle of forgiveness had been

accomplished in my spirit.

On the one-year anniversary of the abduction, the kidnapper called Jaeger, taunting her. But she disarmed him by expressing concern that his actions must have placed a tremendous burden on his soul. He was taken aback, and began to cry. He talked with her for over an hour, revealing enough information about himself for the FBI to identify and find him. At last Jaeger learned the painful details of what had happened to her daughter.

A few months after Susie was buried, a local church contacted Jaeger asking her to speak about how her faith sustained her through the ordeal. This opened the door to many other invitations, through which she met other murder victim family members, as well as people working in different areas of social justice. She explained that

Through my interactions with various activists, I began to make the connection between my personal stance toward the man who had taken Susie's life and our nation's stance toward its enemies. I would never have been complicit in my little girl's death; how could I then be silent about the violence of the death penalty my government was pursuing in my name and with my tax dollars? Now, my primary work is to help people understand forgiveness and its broader applications. We degrade and dehumanize ourselves by practicing capital punishment, and we put ourselves in the same mindset as the murderer. And we insult the inestimable value of our loved one's memory by becoming that which we abhor – people who kill people.

She paused, taking a deep breath. "I will never condone the killing of another chained, defenseless person such as my daughter was," she said in measured tones. "Let us not produce yet another victim and another grieving family."

Through the years Jaeger has continued to work with victims of violence, telling her story and encouraging them to find healing and wholeness. She is critical of the criminal justice system's inability to bring closure or healing, and calls on the church to offer an alternative.

Many churches have prison ministries but I don't know of one church that has a ministry to victims of violence. Most often, victim families become isolated. Victim families need to be

held, loved, prayed for, and listened to. They need to continually process their rage, loss, and grief in order to get it out rather than let it fester within. The Christian community that upholds the value of life and forgiveness needs to be present so that when the victims have processed all of their pain, they hear that the next, best move is to give God permission to change their hearts.

In 1997, Jaeger co-founded Journey of Hope, which has been on the forefront of the death penalty abolitionist movement and annually organizes a speaking tour through a state that executes people. More recently she co-founded Murder Victim Families for Human Rights, in which capacity she has testified before the United Nations Human Rights Commission.⁶ She travels widely inviting people into the struggle for personal and political forgiveness.

Marietta Jaeger reminds us of one of the core truths of restorative justice: transformative power is unleashed when the victim takes the moral initiative. Like Murphy Davis, she is a woman of justice and of mercy, embodying the Sophia wisdom and compassion of God.

II

Another extraordinary biblical metaphor sets the context for our last two stories of peacemaking women: John the Revelator's vision of a woman struggling to protect life in the face of a Beast who threatens incalculable violence:

A great portent appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars. She was pregnant and was crying out in birth pangs, in the agony of giving birth. Then another portent appeared in heaven: a great red dragon.... Then the dragon stood before the woman who was about to bear a child, so that he might devour her child as soon as it was born. And she gave birth to a son.... (Rev. 12:1-5)

The dragon is one of many master symbols used by this apocalyptic writer,

a political prisoner of the Roman Empire in the late first century of the Common Era. In Revelation the dragon stands for the lethal violence of empire. Its intent to “devour the child” is a clear allusion to the gospel tale of Herod’s slaughter of the innocents, which in turn is patterned on the old Exodus story of Pharaoh’s war on the Hebrew firstborn, in which it was midwives who rescued the kids from the king. Like the Levite mother of Moses, this woman gives birth to a son in the teeth of the Dragon, nurturing life in defiance of the power of death. Like Abigail, she confronts a war machine armed only with the power of love.

The woman of Revelation 12 is “clothed with the sun,” standing on the moon and crowned with the stars. Such evocative celestial images are admittedly strange to our modern sensibilities. But we believe that this mysterious female embodies the dictum of the great contemplative Thomas Merton: “Christian hope begins where every other hope stands frozen stiff before the face of the Unspeakable.”⁷ Of course John’s main allusion here is to Mary of Nazareth, the courageous peasant girl who birthed Jesus while fleeing as a political refugee from Herod’s pogroms. This is why Catholic iconography celebrates Mary as the woman clothed with the sun, standing on the moon and cloaked in stars, in the beautiful image of Our Lady of Guadalupe. As the patroness of indigenous peasants displaced by Spanish colonization in Mexico, Guadalupe has inspired many to resist injustice, especially in Chicano movements in the U.S. Southwest.⁸

John’s vision continues with the biblically familiar tale – reiterated twice – of the woman taking refuge in the wilderness (Rev. 12:6,14). The Revelator is clearly drawing on the Exodus motif of Israel’s escape from Pharaoh into the desert. As in the old story, where Creation supported the Hebrews by rising up against the recalcitrant empire in a series of plagues (Ex. 7-11), here “the earth came to the help of the woman,” this time *deflecting* the plagues conjured against her by the Dragon (Rev. 12:16). Nature’s embrace of her, offering protection from imperial violence, gives new meaning to the term “Mother Nature”!

This woman also symbolizes the church as a community of nonviolent resistance, embodying a double capacity: the courage to stand in the face of the Dragon, and the fortitude to dwell in the wilderness when marginalized or persecuted by the forces of Domination. Indeed, this vision was John’s

way of articulating the Ephesian notion of evangelism as engagement with the Domination System, the focus in our first lecture. Such witness often calls us to “noncooperate with and expose the works of darkness” (Eph. 5:11) – a dimension of evangelism understood keenly by 16th-century Anabaptists but often lost on our timid churches today. It does, however, describe the work of Myrna Bethke and Liz McAlister, women “clothed with the sun” who have tried to confront the Dragon of war and weapons of mass destruction.

Myrna Bethke

If Marietta Jaeger’s journey began as a private struggle that evolved into political action, Myrna Bethke’s story began with a spectacularly public crime, to which she offered a deeply personal response. The abduction and torture of Jaeger’s daughter took place in secret; the whole world witnessed the killing of thousands of people in the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Towers. One of those victims was Bethke’s youngest brother Bill. Though his remains have still not been found, a computer card swipe confirmed he was in his office at the time of the collapse. While that attack was used as a call to war by the leaders of the United States, some family members of those killed made poignant pleas that violence not be done in their loved ones’ names, and instead turned their grief into actions for peace. Bethke was among them.

Before 9/11, Bethke would not have described herself as a peace activist. She was pastor of Freehold United Methodist Church in New Jersey, just outside New York City. After the attack, her church opened their doors for all who wanted to come pray. In our interview she explained that:

Once immediate needs were taken care of, I found myself longing to make a response that would work towards redemption and restoration. I was fairly certain at that point that we were



Myrna Bethke with Arifa, who lost her husband and children when a US bomb landed on their home in Kabul.

going to bomb Afghanistan and I was asking myself, “What can I personally do to stop this?” On October 7th the bombing began. It was my brother Bill’s birthday and that year it also happened to be Worldwide Communion Sunday. The reality that the bombing would lead to civilian deaths was deeply troubling to many of us. We had experienced this trauma first hand, as we searched for our loved ones through the rubble of the World Trade Center.

Because the war was being waged in their names, some 9/11 families organized themselves into a nonprofit group called “September 11th Families for Peaceful Tomorrows.” “They united in a determination that the death of their loved ones should not be a cause for more killing and they committed to seeking alternatives to war and working to end the cycle of violence.”⁹ The group represents more than 100 family members of September 11th victims, and has subsequently been nominated for the Nobel Peace prize.

In June of 2002, Bethke was invited to go to Afghanistan as part of an interfaith clergy group. The delegation focused on identifying ways in which the faith community could support humanitarian projects in Kabul, including the rebuilding of schools, clinics, and mosques destroyed during the US-led bombing campaign. “One of the most powerful moments in Afghanistan,” Myrna told us, “was spending time with a beautiful little girl named Amina”:

We spent the day together playing and drawing pictures. Then I learned her story. One morning Amina had gotten up to make tea for her family. She was in the back of the house getting water when a bomb hit the front half of the house. Amina lost her entire family in that instant; she was the only survivor. When she spoke to our group she stood and listed the names of all of her family members who had been killed. I found myself thinking, “No eight-year-old child should have to do this!”

As I was listening to Amina, a memory came flooding back. About two weeks after 9/11, I was talking with my father on the phone when we were interrupted. “The State Police just arrived,” he said, “and they want me to give a DNA sample.” I

felt so horrible that my father had to do that in order to identify his son. In Afghanistan, these two events powerfully came together. It became clear to me that we are all called to build a world in which parents and children do not have to name their dead in this way.

After Bethke returned from Afghanistan she was invited to speak at a Shiite mosque in her community. “The Shias have a long history of lament tradition,” she explained. “After I spoke a woman of the mosque came up to me crying, saying, ‘We thought only the poetry of Arabic could express our lament. Today you taught us that you could lament in English as well.’ I am very grateful for my ongoing relationship with people at this mosque, and consider it one of the blessings that came out of the tragedy of 9/11.”

After the attacks of September 11, Methodist layman George Bush modeled the classic response of retribution: personalizing the evil in Osama bin Laden and launching massive retaliatory strikes against a country simply because bin Laden was resident there. On the other hand, Methodist pastor Bethke modeled a creative restorative response, taking personal responsibility by choosing to stand in solidarity with victims of war on the “other side.”

Elizabeth McAlister

Elizabeth McAlister (*at far right*), a former Roman Catholic nun, gained notoriety in the late 1960s because of her nonviolent resistance to the Vietnam War. She married activist priest Philip Berrigan, and together they founded Jonah House in the inner city of Baltimore, Maryland, which, for more than 30 years, has been on the forefront of prophetic Christian witness against militarism and the nuclear arms race.¹⁰



On Thanksgiving Day, November 24, 1983, McAlister together with six others entered Griffiss Air Force Base in Rome, New York. In a symbolic attempt to turn swords into plowshares, they enacted Isaiah’s prophecy that “nation shall not lift up sword against nation, nor shall they learn war any

more” by hammering on B-52 bombers carrying cruise missiles, and pouring their own blood on the planes.¹¹ They left at the site of their witness a written indictment of the US government pointing to the war crimes of preparing for nuclear war.

While such dramatic and risky “Plowshares Actions” may seem disturbing to many Mennonites who are unfamiliar with them, we should recall that Menno Simons strongly endorsed the Isaianic vision that inspired it. “The regenerated do not go to war, nor engage in strife,” he famously said. “They are children of peace who have ‘beaten their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning forks, and know no war’ (Isaiah 2:4, Micah 4:3).”

In Federal Court McAlister and her companions were convicted of conspiracy and destruction of government property. They received prison sentences ranging from two to three years, which she served at Alderson Women’s Penitentiary. In our recent interview McAlister told us, “I could not have done this action unless I felt under mandate of scripture to beat swords into plowshares and spears into pruning hooks. It was a momentous thing to do, and yet, I had to do something against this death system.”

At the time of this action McAlister had three small children at home. She is deeply concerned for her children and others around the world, since the young are most adversely affected by war. Her commitment to nonviolent resistance has infused all three of her children. As adults, each is now involved in unique expressions of peace and justice work.

In addition to her civil disobedience work, McAlister has mentored hundreds of young activists, and the Jonah House community experiments with urban homesteading, having transformed an abandoned inner city cemetery into a farm with animals, orchards, and vegetable gardens. The consistent gospel message coming from Jonah House has been that if Christians do not experiment with nonviolence as a way of life, then the world will be sentenced to unending wars of empire.

Plowshares actions might not be *the* way, but they are *a* way of stating very clearly these nuclear weapons have no right to exist. We do these nonviolent actions knowing the risk to our own freedom to try to disarm a system of domination. Because our country has weapons, [Americans] invade countries to have

access to their oil, tin, fruit, coffee. People of conscience cannot accept this violence that impoverishes the majority and provides wealth for the few. We need to practice nonviolent resistance, and also disarm our hearts.

McAlister is a gifted teacher of both scripture and the history of social change. We have organized a number of women's discipleship retreats with her in which we looked at stories of women in the Bible. We work hard to rescue these texts from patriarchal interpreters so that we can realize afresh our vocations. She helps us recognize ourselves in the stories of women like Rachel and Leah, Shiprah and Puah, Mary and Martha, and other women of courage and faith.

We give thanks for grandmothers like McAlister, elders who continue to oppose war and injustice in all its forms, who are strong enough to stand up to the Powers and gentle enough to "listen other women into speech."

* * * * *

The four women we have introduced briefly here¹² insist on justice and mercy like Sophia in the village square, and face the Beast of violence in our society like women clothed with the sun. Our peace churches must not neglect the witness of such women, and we must nurture and encourage our young women to embrace such a discipleship.

We will let one more noble elder offer the benediction for this lecture. In 1870, Mother's Day began as an anti-war protest. Echoing the sentiments of ancient *Lysistrata*, Julie Ward Howe's inaugural proclamation issued a clarion call to non-cooperation:

Arise then, women of this day! Arise all women who have hearts, whether your baptism be of water or of tears! Say firmly: Our husbands shall not come to us reeking of carnage for caresses and applause. Our sons shall not be taken from us to unlearn all that we have been able to teach them of charity, mercy, and patience....¹³

Notes

¹ Alice Walker, *Her Blue Body Everything We Know: Earthling Poems 1965-90 Complete* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Publishers, 1991), 233.

² Daniel Garrison Brinton and Constantine Samuel Rafinesque, *The Lenape and Their Legends: With the Complete Text and Symbols of the Walam Olum, a New Translation, and an Inquiry into its Authenticity* (Philadelphia: D.G. Brinton, 1885).

³ www.1000peacewomen.org

⁴ For fuller accounts of these stories see Elaine Enns and Ched Myers, *Ambassadors of Reconciliation, Vol. II: Diverse Christian Practices of Restorative Justice and Peacemaking* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2009), chapters 4, 5, and 6.

⁵ Peter R. Gathje, *A Work of Hospitality: The Open Door Reader, 1982-2002* (Atlanta: Open Door Publications, 2002), 250.

⁶ See Rachel King, *Don't Kill in Our Names: Families of Murder Victims Speak Out Against the Death Penalty* (Piscataway, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2003).

⁷ Thomas Merton, *Raids on the Unspeakable* (New York: New Directions Publishing, 1966), 5.

⁸ On this see Virgil Elizondo, *Guadalupe: Mother of the New Creation* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1997).

⁹ See David Portorti, ed., *September 11th Families for Peaceful Tomorrows: Turning Our Grief into Action for Peace* (New York: ADV Books/Akashic Books, 2003).

¹⁰ See www.jonahhouse.org.

¹¹ See Arthur Laffin, ed., *Swords into Plowshares: A Chronology of Plowshares Disarmament Actions, 1980-2003*. Rev. ed. (New York: Rose Hill Books, 2003). *Editor's note:* Plowshares disarmament actions, whether symbolic or actual, originated with the "Plowshares Eight," who took action at a General Electric plant in Pennsylvania in 1980. These types of actions, their underlying rationale, and the associated movement all differ distinctly from the mission and activities of the similarly named organization Project Ploughshares. Project Ploughshares is an ecumenical agency of the Canadian Council of Churches, and was established in 1976 to implement the churches' call to be peacemakers and to work for a world in which justice will flourish and peace abound. The agency's mandate is to work with churches and related organizations, governments, and non-governmental organizations in Canada and abroad to identify, develop, and advance approaches that build peace and prevent war, and to promote the peaceful resolution of political conflict. See www.ploughshares.ca.

¹² For fuller profiles, see Enns and Myers, *Ambassadors of Reconciliation, Vol. II*.

¹³ For the complete text of Howe's call, see www.peace.ca/mothersdayproclamation.htm.

For three decades, Ched Myers has worked with various peace and justice organizations and movements. Today, with Bartimaeus Cooperative Ministries, located in Oak View, California, he focuses on biblical literacy, church renewal, and faith-based witness for justice. Elaine Enns has worked in restorative justice and conflict transformation since 1989 as a mediator, consultant, educator, and trainer serving individuals, churches, schools,

and businesses. She is also part of Bartimaeus Ministries, an ecumenical experiment in discipleship and mutual aid. Myers and Enns lead seminars and retreats, preach, and facilitate gatherings throughout North America and abroad. They are the authors of Ambassadors of Reconciliation (Vol. I: New Testament Reflections on Restorative Justice and Peacemaking; Vol. II: Diverse Christian Practices of Restorative Justice and Peacemaking), published by Orbis Books in 2009.

THE BECHTEL LECTURES

The Bechtel Lectures in Anabaptist-Mennonite Studies were established at Conrad Grebel University College in 2000, through the generosity of Lester Bechtel, a devoted churchman actively interested in Mennonite history. Lester Bechtel's dream was to make the academic world of research and study accessible to a border constituency, and to build bridges of understanding between the school and the church. The lectures, held annually and open to the public, offer noted scholars and church leaders the opportunity to explore and discuss topics representing the breadth and depth of Mennonite history and identity. Previous lecturers in the series were Terry Martin, Stanley Hauerwas, Rudy Wiebe, Nancy Heisey, Fernando Enns, James Urry, Sandra Birdsell, and Alfred Neufeld.