

Annual 2015 Report

BPFNA  Bautistas por la Paz



Witnessing to God's peace rooted in justice ~ working together until it comes.
Testificando sobre la paz de Dios enraizada en justicia ~ Trabajando hasta que llegue.

No Longer Strangers

The new five-year strategic plan from BPFNA, which includes an updated:

- Theological statement
- Mission statement
- Organizational name
- Staffing model

NO LONGER STRANGERS: CROSSING BORDERS FOR PEACEMAKING

As we began 2015, we started implementation of a new strategic plan that emerged from a nearly two-year discernment process and committed ourselves to a five-year focus: *No Longer Strangers: Crossing Borders for Peacemaking*. You can read the strategic plan in its entirety here: <http://www.bpfna.org/2015>.

THEOLOGICAL STATEMENT

We created a powerful theological statement that undergirds our work. That statement reminds us: *“Jesus came not only for personal salvation and the transformation of individual lives, but also to empower the poor, liberate the oppressed, set free the captive, and pronounce a new day of home and grace for all of creation. As we seek to follow Jesus, we take up this message of liberation and reconciliation.”* Go to <http://www.bpfna.org/2015#Theo> to read the statement in its entirety.

MISSION STATEMENT

Witnessing to God’s peace rooted in justice ~ working together until it comes.
Testificando sobre la paz de Dios enraizada en justicia ~ Trabajando hasta que llegue.

NAME

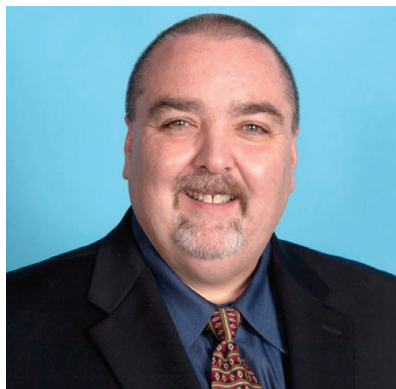
We added *Bautistas por la Paz* to our name to deepen our public commitment to being a four-nation network with roots in Canada, the US, Mexico, and Puerto Rico.

STAFFING

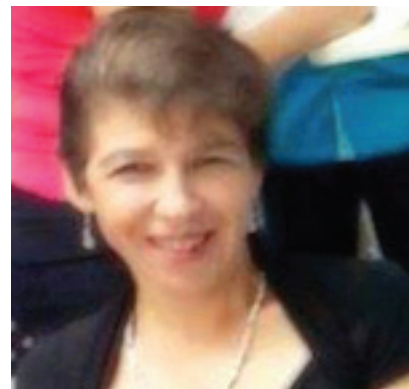
We discerned a new staffing model to fulfill the vision of the five-year plan. Go to <http://www.bpfna.org/2015#Staff> to read the details of our staffing model in full.

- Executive Director (Full-time)
- Communications Manager (Full-time)
- Office Manager (Half-time)
- Finance Manager (Quarter-time)
- Baptist Peacemaker Editor (Quarter-time)
- Spanish Resources Manager (Contract)
- Summer Conference Manager (Contract)

To fulfill this staffing model, we hired two new staff members in 2015. **Hortensia Azucena Picos Lee** joined the BPFNA staff in June as the Spanish Resources Manager and **Scott Hayes** joined the staff in March as the Office Manager. Scott is also currently in the role of Summer Conference Manager for 2016.



Scott Hayes



Hortensia Azucena Picos Lee

WORLD PEACE NETWORKS

In 2015 we:

- Sponsored a Conflict Transformation training for the professors and staff of **Andhra Christian Theological College, India** led by Lee McKenna and Chaks Zadda.
- Supported our friends at **Crossing Lines-Africa** in conducting a successful one-day Conflict Transformation workshop for University Student Leaders at Hands of Grace Community Church in Kampala – Uganda. The training gathered a total of 57 student leaders for an emphasis on LGBTQ equality and pride, including conflict analysis and nonviolent transforming initiatives.
- We also helped **Crossing Lines** to secure other funding for their courageous and innovative work to empower and train young LGBTQ leaders in Uganda

GAVEL MEMORIAL WORLD PEACE FUND

Through the Gavel Memorial World Peace Fund, we also provided general support to these groups:

- **Pan African Peace Network (PAP-NET)** works to usher in a novel era of mutually beneficial nonviolent conflict transformation synergies to transform African conflicts while fostering social equity and community progress through pacifism, not passivism. PAPNET, under the leadership of Lancelot Muteyo, has quickly become established as a “go to” group for excellent Conflict Transformation training in a wide variety of settings throughout the continent. Lance has been invited to work with groups as diverse as the youth of the Baptist Convention of Malawi and the chiefs and elders of a conflicted region of his native Zimbabwe.
- **Jitokeze Wamama Wafrika** serves the households of marginalized women and girls in Kenya who are most vulnerable to the impacts of droughts and conflicts induced by climate change. They do excellent work in the interconnected areas of food security, water security, income security and peacebuilding/conflict transformation.
- **Kingdom of Peace and Development (KOPAD)** works with rural communities to identify unique resources in their localities that can sustainably be utilized to achieve community growth, development, and transformation. KOPAD is led by Boaz Keibarak, a talented young peacemaker who has created a truly comprehensive campaign for the transformation of his native Kenya, particularly in the conflict-ridden counties of West Pokot and Turkana. KOPAD, under Boaz’s leadership, has a very thorough plan for intense training and peace work throughout the region.



Lance Muteyo leading children in a Conflict Transformation exercise called the Ankle Walk.

WPN

World Peace Networks

WPN includes all of our work beyond North America.

2015 Highlights

- Sponsored Conflict Transformation trainings in India and Uganda.
- Funded the work of various groups through the Gavel Memorial World Peace Fund, including:
 - *Pan-African Peace Network (PAP-NET)*
 - *Jitokeze Wamama Wafrika*
 - *Kingdom of Peace and Development (KOPAD)*
 - *Peacebuilding, Healing, and Reconciliation Programme (PHARP)*

WPN

World Peace Networks

WPN includes all of our work beyond North America.

LOOKING AHEAD...

In 2015 we re-vamped the Gavel Fund application process and guidelines to be more inclusive.

WPN Projects for 2016:

- *Academia de Formación Espiritual, Puerto Rico*
- *BorderLinks & Mariposas Sin Fronteras / Butterflies Without Borders*
- *Crossing Lines*
- *Global Baptist Peace Conference*
- *Iglesia Bautista Jerusalén / Jerusalem Baptist Church*
- *Iglesias por la Paz*
- *Jitokeze Wamama Wafrika*
- *Kingdom of Peace & Development (KOPAD)*
- *PAP-NET*
- *Red Crearte*
- *Seminario Evangélico de Puerto Rico / Evangelical Seminary of Puerto Rico*
- *Together in Christ*

- **Peacebuilding, Healing and Reconciliation Programme (PHARP)** in Nairobi, Kenya works to foster peace, healing, reconciliation, and discipleship through training in conflict prevention, transformation, and reconstruction. Our funding supported PHARP's ongoing programs including the Peace Community Empowerment Project that targets youth between 13-18 years who are being prepared by some community elders for cattle rustling, a major source of on-going conflict. PHARP worked to equip 60 youth and 20 community elders for conflict transformation, trauma healing and reconciliation.

GAVEL FUND APPLICATION PROCESS

In May 2015, the BPFNA board of directors approved a new application process for funding available through the Gavel Fund. The new process is designed to make it easier for partners within North America to apply and to make the decision-making process more consistent. Grants will be given to support these three areas:

- **Equipping:** *We equip individuals, regional groups, and congregations with tools for spoken witness and the hands-on work of peace rooted in justice. Trainings should bring new skills to the community and build capacity for peacemaking. Priority will be given to programs with a proven track record that are time-specific.*
- **Mobilizing:** *We mobilize individuals, groups, and churches, in response to pressing concerns – guided by the wisdom of those whose realities are local to the concern at hand. A responsible project is one that will build capacity for a culture of peace. Proposals under this category will be designated to assist indigenous or local people to facilitate compassionate responses to specific issues or crises.*
- **Gathering:** *We gather together regionally and internationally to mutually strengthen and support one another's witness through community prayer, education, fellowship, and song. Gatherings are an essential part of peacemaking and of building community. Gatherings funded by the Gavel Fund need to have a clear objective to build friendships and understanding across cultures and/or to build relationships for working together on a particular issue for peace.*

To read more about this process, go to <http://bit.ly/gavel-app>.

AS A RESULT OF THE NEW GAVEL FUND APPLICATION PROCESS, WE WILL BE SUPPORTING THE FOLLOWING GROUPS IN 2016:

- **Academia de Formación Espiritual, Puerto Rico:** *Espiritualidad de Esperanza en Medio de la Crisis. / The Academy of Spiritual Formation in Puerto Rico sponsoring a conference with the theme Spirituality of Hope at a Time of Crisis.*
- **BorderLinks and Mariposas Sin Fronteras:** *Programa de Visitación Amig@as de las Mariposas: Reclutamiento y Entrenamientos de Voluntari@s. / Borderlinks and Butterflies Without Borders: Training a core group of volunteers to be in relationship with and visit migrants in Arizona detention centers.*
- **Crossing Lines:** *Combatting Electoral Violence through Conflict Transformation Trainings for Peaceful Elections in 2016.*
- **Global Baptist Peace Conference:** *Scholarships for 2017 Conference Gathering*
- **Iglesia Bautista Jerusalén:** *Visitas para la formación en la paz con justicia en una iglesia de Chiapas, Mexico. / Jerusalem Baptist Church of Mexico City: Visits for peace and justice building in the community. Training of leaders of a local church in Chiapas, Mexico in peace building around specific issues of conflict in the local community.*

- **Iglesias por la Paz:** *Acompañamiento pastoral a víctimas de violencia en México a familiares de desaparecidos y/o asesinados. / Pastoral accompaniment to family members of victims of violence who have been murdered or disappeared in Mexico.*
- **Jitokeze Wamama Wafrika:** *Annual Jitokeze Friendship and Learning Tour for 2016.*
- **Kingdom of Peace and Development (KOPAD):** *Widows Trauma Healing and Reconciliation Conference.*
- **PAP-NET:** *Training of Conflict Transformation Trainers for Children Living in the Streets.*
- **Red Crearte:** *Música y arte litúrgico en red. / Red Crearte: Project for the compilation of liturgical and musical resources.*
- **Seminario Evangélico de Puerto Rico:** *Iniciativa Seminario Verde. / Eco-theological Initiative of the Evangelical Seminary of Puerto Rico: Training for pastors /ministers and lay leaders in the development of a theology of care for all creation.*
- **Together in Christ:** *Peace & Reconciliation Project for Sierra Leonean Immigrants in the US.*

LOCAL PEACE NETWORKS

In 2015 we:

- Created a **discussion guide** to encourage groups to see and discuss the movie *Selma*.
- Co-sponsored an **interfaith conference on drone warfare**.
- Led two **Friendship Tours:** In February we sent a group of 15 to El Paso, TX/Ciudad Juarez, Mexico, and in August we sent a group of 10 to St. Louis/Ferguson, MO.
- Reactivated the **Williamson Peace Action Fund** to support the work of gathering, equipping and mobilizing that emerges from our members and/or the small, grassroots, local organizations of which they are a part.
- Sent a representative to the **50th Anniversary of the Selma to Montgomery Voting Rights March**.
- Promoted **10 Days of Peace**, a project of Iglesias por la Paz.
- Sent representatives to the **100th anniversary celebration** of our partners FOR-USA.

FRIENDSHIP TOURS

*El Paso, TX/Ciudad Juarez, Mexico
February 8-14, 2015*

In February we sent a delegation of 15 to the US/Mexico border for a “Justice at the Border” Friendship Tour. Ten of the 15 were offered scholarships, which allowed them to experience in deep and transformative ways the many issues of injustice on the US-Mexico border and empowered them to work in solidarity with people/groups on both side of the border who are addressing those issues.

“Justice at the Border” participants then planned and led an intense track of workshops for our annual summer conference to educate individuals and churches on how they can respond to the many issues of injustice made manifest at the US-Mexico border. They also shared their insights in a wide variety of formats within and beyond the BPFNA ~ Bautistas por la Paz network.

LPN

Local Peace Networks

LPN includes includes projects within our four home countries of Puerto Rico, Mexico, the US and Canada.

“Wow! What an experience! The Border Awareness Experience was so very fine. You really picked some great group leaders. They did a bang-up job. So many unique experiences, so many inspiring people we met. It is a great program. I feel very privileged to have been a part of it.” –Participant in the “Justice at the Border” Friendship Tour

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“We were honored to join your delegation by standing in solidarity with the community of protesters and faith leaders in St. Louis and Ferguson that week.” –Participant on the St. Louis/Ferguson Friendship Tour

“My family came from Burma, but I grew up in a Thai Refugee Camp due to the Burmese military dictatorship. The military fired at and attacked our village, and we had no choice but to leave everything behind. I stayed in the camp (surrounded by wire) for almost 13 years. When we arrived at the [US/Mexico] border, I felt a connection to the other side of the wire/line that separated us from the others. I recognized what it was like to live behind the wire. I could relate so much when hearing the stories of why people had to leave their hometowns without having many choices. Sometimes we might draw conclusions with a lack of knowledge of the real truth from the people we consider strangers or undocumented.” –Participant in the “Justice at the Border” Friendship Tour



“Justice at the Border” Friendship Tour participants standing in front of a mural with an Oscar Romero quote that says, “If they kill me, I will be reborn in [my] people.”

St. Louis/Ferguson, MO **August 6-12, 2015**

In August we sent a delegation to take part in the one-year commemoration of Michael Brown’s death in Ferguson, MO, to be part of a powerful witness to the power of the people to resist and organize for human rights. We secured scholarships for 10 participants, some of whom are long-time members and some of whom are brand new to us.

While there, we provided our members and churches with frequent updates from Ferguson along with an extensive list of ways individuals and churches outside of Ferguson could participate and support the commemoration events.



Members of the BPFNA Friendship Tour to Ferguson/St. Louis.



Delegates on the Friendship Tour to Ferguson participated in this Moral Monday action in front of the St. Louis Department of Justice to demand more accountability from police and state officials.

In partnership with this trip, we will assemble a working group and have committed ourselves to spend at least the next year in focused self-reflection (individual and corporate) around the theme **Centering Black Lives in Pursuit of Racial Justice**.

“When people ask about my experience in Ferguson, I tell them it was the holiest experience of my life, and it was. I felt like I was putting feet on my faith, doing what Jesus has long commanded us to do. To fight with and for the oppressed.” –**Participant on the St. Louis/Ferguson Friendship Tour**

PUBLICATIONS

Our publications provide a consistent way to inform, inspire, and equip the work of peace.

BAPTIST PEACEMAKER

This year we published four new issues of the award-winning *Baptist Peacemaker*. *Baptist Peacemaker* was honored again this year with a “Best of the Christian Press” award from the Associated Church Press (ACP) for Bob Tiller’s “Inching Toward Peace Between Israel and Palestine.”

“Belated appreciation for the top-notch Jan-March Baptist Peacemaker; inspiring articles and poetry and reflections.” –**BPFNA member**

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“The April-June issue of the Baptist Peacemaker was another in wonderfully prophetic writing; with the stories of practical action being taken . . . thanks for continuing to remind us of the active proponents of peacemaking.” –**BPFNA member**

BORDERS I CROSS

In 2015 we published a weekly essay series called “The Borders I Cross,” a collection of wonderfully inspiring stories of some of the many, many ways ordinary people can cross borders to create peace. You can read these stories here: <http://www.bpfna.org/bordersicross>.

ISSUE MONOGRAPHS

This year we added two new monographs to our “What Your Church Can Do About...” Issue Monograph series. The two published in 2015 were on the issues of **Moral Injury of War** and **Migrant Justice**. Go here to download free electronic copies of our monographs: <http://www.bpfna.org/mobilize/issue-monographs>.

MODEL MINISTRIES

In 2015 we continued to produce four issues of our quarterly electronic publication *Model Ministries* that focuses on the work for peace rooted in justice being done by BPFNA Partner Congregations.

STAFF EDITORIALS

In 2015 Executive Director LeDayne McLeese Polaski and Communications Manager Allison Paksoy both had essays published in *Baptist News Global*.

TEN GREAT THINGS TO GIVE FOR THE HOLIDAYS

We also created our annual piece, *Ten Great Things to Give for the Holidays*, which encourages people to use their holiday gift-giving to support justice.

VOCATION OF PEACEMAKING

This year we published the third and final volume of “The Vocation of Peacemaking,” a series of essays written by members and friends of BPFNA reflecting on how they live out the call to peace in their daily lives. Go to <http://www.bpfna.org/vocationofpeace> to read these stories.

Publications

2015 publications:

- Baptist Peacemaker
- Borders I Cross
- Issue Monographs
 - *What Your Church Can Do About Moral Injury of War*
 - *What Your Church Can Do About Migrant Justice*
- Model Ministries
- Staff editorials
- Ten Great Things to Give for the Holidays
- Vocation of Peacemaking

LOOKING AHEAD...

This year we laid the groundwork for publishing *Born in Sin, Upended in Grace*, the upcoming memoir of BPFNA Founding President George Williamson.

Be on the lookout for this publication in 2016!

Gatherings

2015 Gatherings Overview

- Peace Breakfasts
 - *Cooperative Baptist Fellowship General Assembly*
 - *American Baptist Churches Mission Summit/Biennial*
- Young Adult gathering in Cuba
- Peace, Justice & Fun
- Summer Conference

GATHERINGS

BPFNA gatherings are opportunities for peacemakers to come together in fellowship and gain the skills and/or knowledge to work for peace rooted in justice in their own communities.

PEACE BREAKFASTS

“It is clear . . . that you are leading the Fellowship in a powerful witness for justice and peace in our nation and the world.” –Peace Breakfast attendee, 2015

Cooperative Baptist Fellowship (CBF) General Assembly June 18, 2015

At the national gathering of CBF in Dallas, TX, we sponsored a Peace Breakfast program titled *“I Was A Stranger: The Church and Immigration.”*

“The [CBF] Peace Breakfast was moving and challenging.” –CBF Peace Breakfast attendee, 2015

American Baptist Churches Mission Summit/Biennial June 28, 2015

At the national gathering of ABC-USA, we offered a Peace Breakfast program titled *“The Black Lives Matter Movement: A Call to Christian Action.”*

“I’ve heard how great peace breakfast is ... So glad I went. One of the highlights of the biennial. Thanks for all you do.” –ABC Peace Breakfast attendee, 2015

YOUNG ADULT GATHERING IN CUBA

In 2015 we helped to create *“Crossing Borders as Young Leaders,”* a gathering in Cuba held in conjunction with la Fraternidad de Iglesias de Bautistas de Cuba and the Alliance of Baptists.

PEACE, JUSTICE, AND FUN

While at the ABC Mission Summit, we also held *Peace, Justice, and Fun*, a concert and celebration of all things Fair Trade. The concert featured the music of Steve Gretz and Leslie Lee.

LESLIE LEE & STEVE GRETZ
KANSAS CITY

PEACE • JUSTICE • FUN!
FRIDAY, JUNE 26, 2015
9:00PM-10:30PM
COURTYARD ROOM 7 (FREE)

PEACE BREAKFAST
SUNDAY, JUNE 28, 2015
7:00AM-8:45AM
\$20 (REGISTRATION REQUIRED)

American Baptist Churches/USA Biennial Mission Summit
Overland Park Convention Center • 6000 College Blvd • Overland Park, KS

Sponsored by BPFNA and Equal Exchange

www.leslieandsteve.com www.bpfna.org www.equalexchange.coop www.americanbaptists2015.com

SUMMER CONFERENCE / PEACE CAMP

"It's the most fun thing I do for myself each year! So grateful to you who keep making it happen!"
—Summer Conference attendee, 2015

We had a fabulous Summer Conference with the theme **"No Longer Strangers: Crossing Borders for Peacemaking."** In addition to programming for children, youth, young adults and adults, we convened an international seminarians gathering with participants from nine countries. Participants in February's "Justice at the Border" Friendship Tour presented an informative series of workshops to shape our actions on border issues in the coming year.



SAVE THE DATES FOR UPCOMING SUMMER CONFERENCES!

2016

When Did We See You in Prison: Breaking Social and Structural Injustice

June 27 - July 2
Cheyney University
Cheyney, PA (near Philadelphia, USA)

Cheyney is the oldest historically Black institution of higher education in the United States.

2017

A gathering focused on solidarity with and empowerment of "the least of these."

July 17-22
Misión Mazahua (an hour outside of Toluca, the capital of the State of Mexico.)

This will be our first Summer Conference ever held in Mexico!



Gatherings

What people are saying about our 2015 Summer Conference:

"The camp experience was extraordinary, I was very blessed in many ways, especially to share with wonderful people who love and struggle for peace, inclusion and justice without barriers."

.....

"Peace Camp is mental, spiritual, philosophical, and emotional support to do the work we are called to do in our everyday communities."

.....

"It always feels like 'coming home.' I can share what we are doing in our community, what we are struggling with and exchange ideas and stories. I return home challenged, energized and affirmed."

.....

"Excellent and challenging program on a variety of ways to practice peacemaking in my local community and congregation."

.....

"Waging peace is not easy work, and to be in the presence of those with similar values and goals will feed and renew my tired spirit."

Gatherings

Summer Conference photos.

All photos were taken by Steve Hammond.

Previous page (from top to bottom):

Peace Camp children leading the adults in prayer.

Richard Myers and Jonathan Stafford at Saturday morning Young Adult service.

The 2015 Prom for All Queen and King: Sarah Burkett and Josue Saldivar Hernandez.



Gatherings

Summer Conference photos.

All photos were taken by Steve Hammond.

This page:

(Top left): Youth leading worship during the annual Friday night Youth night.

(Top right): William Moses Summerville and Lee McKenna at Prom For All.

(Middle left): Rev. Dr. Doris Garcia and Rev. Javier Ulloa-Castellanos leading worship.

(Middle right): Leslie Lee, Elijah Culp, and Steve Gretz leading Peace Camp goers in song.

(Bottom left): Summer Conference attendees gathered for the annual Young Adult Saturday morning service.

(Bottom right): Young Adults leading folks in worship.



Trainings

Conflict Transformation (CT) goes beyond Conflict Resolution in that it seeks to address the underlying causes of conflict instead of simply seeking to find a harmonious compromise.

- CT Trainings in 2015:
 - Ten-day Training of Conflict Transformation Trainers.
 - One-day Introduction to Conflict Transformation at ABC and CBF gatherings.
 - Training at Butner Federal Correctional Facility.

CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION

Conflict Transformation trainings provide people with the skills to better understand conflict, explore the deeper (often hidden) issues at stake, and deal with conflict in constructive ways that maximize its power for positive change. Trained individuals are then able to use their skills to transform communities and train others throughout the world.

TCTT

In 2015 we provided scholarships for a 10-Day Training of Conflict Transformation Trainers (TCTT) led by longtime BPFNA members Dan and Sharon Buttry. Photos included below.

“This training is just what I needed and at the right time. I cannot thank you enough; God is awesome! I’m so grateful our paths crossed. Only God knew how passionate I am for issues of peace and justice.” –TCTT participant, 2015



INTRODUCTION TO CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION

This year we offered a one-day Introduction to Conflict Transformation at the ABC Mission Summit as well as an introductory workshop as part of the CBF-North Carolina gathering.

“The curious questions and listening tools were really helpful.” –Intro to CT training participant, 2015

“The most helpful thing for me was being reminded that conflict is an opportunity to know and that it is a part of the human experience.” –Intro to CT training participant, 2015

TRAINING AT BUTNER FEDERAL CORRECTIONAL FACILITY

In 2015 we led our first Conflict Transformation training for students leaving incarceration and returning to the community as well as our first event within a detention center, Butner Federal Correctional Facility.

“I will be taking home a new attitude about conflict.” –Butner Federal Correctional Facility training participant, 2015

“It was nice to be around someone who really cares.” –Butner Federal Correctional Facility training participant, 2015

OTHER TRAININGS

DISMANTLING RACISM

BPFNA staff members attended two-day **Dismantling Racism workshops** to strengthen our ability to do anti-oppression work.



Participants in the TCTT training

Trainings

“I just came back from my two-week intensive training of TCTT in Detroit. It was a remarkable experience for me, and thank you very much for kindly offering me the necessary scholarship for this training. Dan and his colleagues are phenomenal trainers. I learned a lot from them. I look forward to using all the materials they shared with us when I go back to Burma. Again, I just want to say thank you very much for your support.” –TCTT participant, 2015

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“The stories were good, the small group work was helpful and all the handouts were great.” –Intro to CT training participant, 2015

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“This training taught me things I never knew about myself.” –Butner Federal Correctional Facility training participant, 2015

PCs

Partner Congregations

Strengthening the network of peacemaking Baptists & encouraging strategic alliances for mission between BPFNA ~ Bautistas por la Paz & local churches, the Partner Congregation program provides member churches with valuable networking opportunities and peacemaking resources.

PARTNER CONGREGATIONS

“We are always honored to be known as part of the BPFNA.” –Member of a Partner Congregation

“Delighted to be your partners in peace!” –Partner Congregation Pastor

We provide our Partner Congregations with subscriptions to *Baptist Peacemaker* and *Model Ministries*, discounts on all materials we create, worship resources, vouchers to help members attend Summer Conference, calls to action, resource suggestions, free Conflict Transformation training and/or a BPFNA speaker and the opportunity to be networked with fellow peace-minded congregations.

BPFNA staff also brought greetings, spoke, visited, or preached at 22 Partner Congregations throughout 2015.



Members of BPFNA Partner Congregations in Rhode Island display a quilt made in remembrance of victims of gun violence. Members of the Rhode Island Religious Coalition can have this quilt on display during services of prayer and concern for gun violence.



Members of Park Road Baptist Church in Charlotte, NC (a BPFNA Partner Congregation) join with MeckMin and BPFNA ~ Bautistas por la Paz in fostering community awareness of racial justice issues after the tragedy in Charleston and recent burnings of seven African-American churches in the Carolinas.

SEMINARY OUTREACH

SEMINARIO INTERCULTURAL MAYENSE (SIM)

Rev. Dr. Amaury Tañón-Santos, president of the BPFNA board of directors, taught **Eschatology: Theology in History, Promise of Justice, and Peacemaking** at SIM in San Cristobal, Chiapas, Mexico.

“We are thankful to God and celebrate the presence of our friend and brother Amaury.” –SIM student, 2015

In addition, this year the Summer Conference attendees contributed a total of \$5,157 to help the Mayan Intercultural Seminary in Chiapas buy a new-to-them truck. Added to the funds raised by our friends at Partner Congregation Noank Baptist Church in Noank, CT, this brings the total raised thus far to \$15,649 -- enough to cover the projected total of a “new” used truck.

“The Mayan Intercultural Seminary is grateful to our brothers and sisters of BPFNA, because through you God has shown us his faithfulness and grace at all times. With your financial support, in a short time it was managed to raise the sum for the purchase of a new truck.” –SIM personnel, 2015

SUMMER CONFERENCE

Seminarians from Sri Lanka, Canada, Cuba, Haiti, the US, Liberia, Mexico, Nagaland, and Puerto Rico gathered at our summer conference to hear from conference leaders and dream together about how they can put what they were learning to work in their home communities. They’ve formed a Facebook group to stay in touch throughout the year.

LOOKING AHEAD

In June 2016 we will partner with the Alliance of Baptists and Pullen Memorial Baptist Church (a BPFNA Partner Congregation) to provide a class as part of the **Hispanic Summer Program**. The course, called **Breaking the Cycle: Love Your Enemy** will be taught by BPFNA board member Mayra Picos-Lee.



Rev. Osagyefo Uhuru Sekou, one of our Summer Conference speakers and a leader in the Black Lives Matter movement in St. Louis, meeting with the group of Seminarians at BPFNA's 2015 Summer Conference. Photo by Nathan Watts.

Seminary Outreach

2015 Highlights:

- A peacemaking course at the Seminario Intercultural Mayense (SIM).
- International Seminarians gathering at our 2015 annual Summer Conference.

LOOKING AHEAD...

- A 2016 course at the Hispanic Summer Program and SIM.

Advocacy

Throughout 2015, we have encouraged our members and partners to speak out on and advocate for a variety of things. These include but are not limited to issues such as:

- Clemency in death penalty cases in Georgia (US) and Indonesia
- Criminal justice reform
- Fair Trade
- Justice in Palestine/Israel
- Net neutrality
- Open investigation of disappearances in Mexico
- Reasonable gun regulations in the US
- Reasonable regulations on payday lending
- The restoration of voting rights
- Welcoming refugees

LOOKING AHEAD...

We are currently in the process of creating a working group to assist BPFNA staff and board to center black lives in the work of this organization in pursuit of liberation for all.

ADVOCACY

GENERAL

Provided key leadership within the Christian Peace Circle, a gathering for leaders of a wonderfully diverse group faith-based peace and justice organizations.

WAR AND MILITARY VIOLENCE

Participated in the initial efforts to coordinate a **Christian Peace Response** to the war in Syria and the ongoing military violence of the US and its coalition partners.

Sent a delegation to the annual **SOA Watch** events calling for the closure of the US Army School of the Americas.

Completed an **Issue Monograph** on *“What Your Church Can Do about the Moral Injury of War.”*

MIGRANT & REFUGEE JUSTICE

Offered a workshop on Migrant Justice at the American Baptist Church’s **Space for Grace** gathering.

Completed an **Issue Monograph** on *“What Your Church Can Do about Migrant Justice.”*

Regularly shared **worship and educational resources** on the response to and welcoming of **refugees**.

“Thank you for the resources on welcoming refugees. Right on time as always.” –BPFNA member

FAIR TRADE

Continued to run the **Baptist Fair Trade Network** to empower small farmers and educate congregations on economic justice issues.

GUN VIOLENCE

Regularly shared **worship and educational resources** on the issue of **gun violence**.

HURRICANE KATRINA: 10 YEAR ANNIVERSARY

Took part in the 10th anniversary celebration of Churches Supporting Churches, calling for continued and equitable recovery efforts to those still struggling 10 years after Hurricane Katrina.

CENTERING BLACK LIVES

Regularly shared worship and education resources on issues concerning the Black Lives Matter Movement and police and state violence against unarmed Black civilians.

“The messages on Baltimore have been very helpful. It is times like these I am so grateful for the BPFNA listserv -- Thanks so much . . . We will certainly be reflecting on the intersection of our faith and Baltimore this Sunday at [our church].” –BPFNA member, 2015

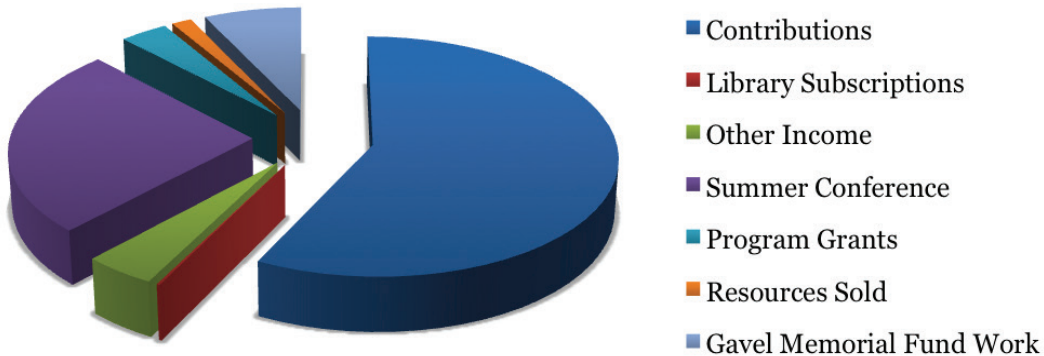
“Thanks so much for the work you have done this week pooling together these resources and responses -- very powerful and grounding and important for me personally this week. Thanks.” –BPFNA member, 2015

“Thank you, thank you, thank you for making us aware of the hymn remembering the victims of the Charleston massacre. It was the most powerful part of our worship service this Sunday.” –BPFNA Partner Congregation, 2015

FINANCES

Generous contributions from members, congregations, and others have made possible all the work you see on these pages. We have done significant work in the past year to increase giving and reduce expenses so that we can expand our work for peace rooted in justice throughout North America and around the world.

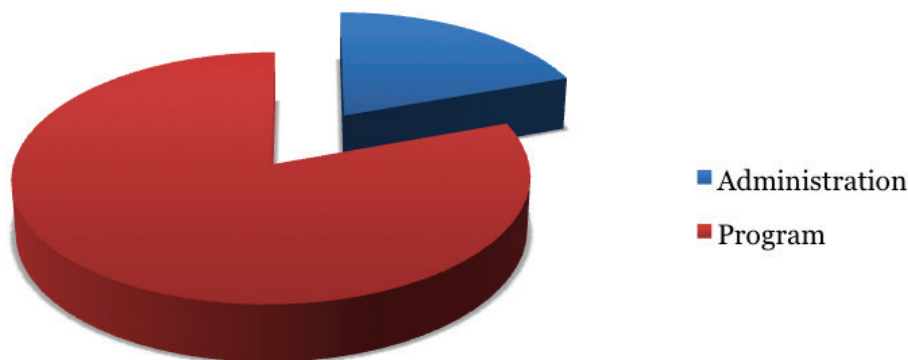
2015 INCOME CHART:



BREAKDOWN OF FUNDS:

Contributions - \$235,698.14
 Library Subscriptions - \$780
 Other Income - \$17,821.14
 Summer Conference - \$105,581.57
 Program Grants - \$14,602.80
 Sale of Resources - \$6,098.29
 Gavel Memorial Fund Work - \$29,636.20

2015 EXPENSE CHART:



BREAKDOWN OF FUNDS:

Administration - \$80,232.46
 Program - \$331,699.06

Finances

MATCHING GRANT HIGHLIGHTS:

This year, thanks to a strong response to a generous \$40,000 matching grant, **we've had our best year ever financially!**

- **215** people gave for the first time
- **494** people increased their annual gift
- Additionally **61** pledgers increased their annual pledges
- We also received a new major gift of **\$25,000**

This totals **\$77,172** in new and increased giving.

With the match, that's a total impact of over \$117,000 toward our ever-increasing witness for peace rooted in justice!

This is all because of generous donors like you.

THANK YOU!

This increased giving has allowed us to dream big for 2016! Your continued strong support will allow us to nurture and extend the work of peace.

LOOKING AHEAD...

2016 THEME: "WHEN DID WE SEE YOU IN PRISON?"

We begin a focus on breaking social and structural injustice with our annual theme.

THREE BOOKS AND A MOVIE

This quarterly online Book and Movie club will encourage members to read/see and discuss books/movies with justice-related themes.

Tuesday, January 26, 2016 • 7-8:30 PM ET • *Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption* • by Bryan Stevenson

Date & Time TBD • *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* • by Michelle Alexander
(We'll read that along with a companion piece *Building a Movement to End the New Jim Crow: An Organizing Guide* by BPFNA's own Daniel Hunter.)

Date & Time TBD • *Where Should the Birds Fly* • The first film about Gaza made by Palestinians.

Date & Time TBD • *To Do Justice: A Guide for Progressive Christians* • by Rebecca Todd Peters & Elizabeth Hinson-Hasty

CENTERING BLACK LIVES

We will assemble a working group and continue our focus of centering Black lives within the organization in pursuit of racial justice.

CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION TRAININGS

Racial Justice-focused Training

Do Not Be Afraid: Building the Beloved Community Conflict Transformation Training – a version of our Conflict Transformation training that will directly address deep racial issues.

Training in Puerto Rico

We will hold a week-long Conflict Transformation Intensive at the Evangelical Seminary of San Juan.

Second Training at Butner Federal Correctional Complex

A year-long workshop Conflict Transformation series for inmates at Butner Federal Correctional Complex.

PEACE BREAKFAST

In June of 2016 we will hold our annual Peace Breakfast at the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship National Assembly. Our Keynote speaker will be Dr. Saundra D. Westervelt, author (with Kimberly J. Cook) of *Life after Death Row: Exonerees' Search for Community and Identity*, which examines the post-release obstacles faced by eighteen death row exonerees. A portion of the proceeds will benefit Witness to Innocence (WTI), the only organization in the United States composed of and led by exonerated death row survivors and their family members.

PEACEMAKING COURSES

SIM

In 2016 BPFNA Board President Amaury Tañón-Santos will teach an intensive peacemaking course called *Preaching, Telling Our Stories, and Peacemaking*, an intensive course at the Mayan Intercultural Seminary in Chiapas, Mexico.

Hispanic Summer Program

BPFNA Board member Mayra Picos Lee will teach a course called *Breaking the Cycle: Love Your Enemy*, which will be offered as part of the Hispanic Summer Program in June 2016.

SUMMER CONFERENCE

Our 2016 Summer Conference will be held from *June 27-July 2 on the campus of Cheyney University in Cheyney, PA* (about 20 minutes west of Philadelphia). Visit <http://www.bpfna.org/gather/summer-conference> for more information!

OTHER EVENTS

In May 2016 we will hold a *Benefit Concert featuring Kate Campbell* that will benefit BPFNA and Workers' Dignity / Dignidad Obrera of Nashville. You can purchase tickets at <http://www.bpfna.org/benefit-concert>.