

# “Do Unto Others”

The Golden Rule and Our  
Call to Nuclear Abolition



UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Forward.....	3
Introduction to Course.....	4
Session 1: The UCC General Synod resolution and the scope of the problem with nuclear weapons.....	5
Assignments for Session 1 .....	10
Tasks and Questions to Consider.....	10
Sessions 2 and 3: “Do Unto Others”: The Golden Rule and Our Call to Nuclear Abolition.....	11
Session 2: Nuclear Deterrence.....	12
Assignments for Session 2.....	13
Questions to be addressed in the session.....	13
Session 3: The Golden Rule.....	14
Assignments for Session 3.....	15
Session 4: The Interconnections between the climate emergency and nuclear weapons/war.....	16
Assignment for Session 4.....	16
Session 5 - Opportunities for Action.....	17
Nuclear Weapons Abolition and the Peace Movement.....	18
Assignments for Session 5.....	19
Questions to be addressed in this session.....	19
Postscript.....	20
Appendix 1 – Next Steps after Signing on to the BftB Campaign.....	21
Appendix 2 – From George Lakey, “How We Win” .....	22
Appendix 3 – General Synod resolution.....	23
Appendix 4 – Model Local church resolution.....	27
Appendix 5 – Scripture passages for all sessions.....	30
Appendix 6 – Resources (books, articles, videos, websites).....	31

"DO UNTO OTHERS"

## FORWARD

Throughout our history, the United Church of Christ (UCC) has been vocal in our opposition to the development, possession, testing, and use of nuclear weapons. As early as 1979, the UCC passed a General Synod resolution calling for the reversal of the “arms race” and in 1985, we issued a groundbreaking Just Peace Pronouncement that articulated a theological position on issues of war and peace based on the call to address systemic injustice. Through our Just Peace witness, the United Church of Christ has orientated itself in opposition to the “institution” of war and called for the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction. Over the past 30 years as a Just Peace Church we have issued resolutions and statements supporting the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), the New START agreement, and, most recently, the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in 2019.

As important as all these statements and efforts are, what is needed today are not more statements or resolutions, but rather a revolution – a movement in which “we the people” join together to build power and bring about the world we see possible – a world without nuclear weapons. Today, we are seeing the power of movements around racial justice and climate change to bring about such policy change. The same must be done to rid the world of nuclear weapons. This study is an invitation to that nuclear abolition movement, a call to action for UCC churches to support the Back from the Brink campaign and other anti-nuclear movements. As people of faith, we believe “Peace is possible!” Let us not simply call for peace, but also devote the time, study and action needed to make that vision a reality. I believe this course is a great place to get started in that work.

Courage in the Struggle-  
 Rev. Michael Neuroth  
 Policy Advocate for International Issues  
 United Church of Christ



"DO UNTO OTHERS"

## INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE

As we write, not only our country, but also virtually the entire world are in the throes of the widespread Coronavirus. Though it is not yet clear what needs to be our best response, one fact remains: we must globally collaborate. Otherwise, we risk it endangering the family of humanity.

The same course of action applies to the longstanding crisis of the very existence of nuclear weapons. Unless we come to realize that the Golden Rule has never been more applicable; unless we and the other eight possessor-nations recognize the utter need to work together to dismantle the "doomsday machine" as writer, Daniel Ellsberg put it, we run the risk of jeopardizing the future for our children and "theirs".

Our intention is to guide us to the truth that, in the words of Turkish author, Orhan Pamuk, "I am the other." Our conviction is that omni-lateral cooperation is our one and only hope. We do not want to come across as alarmist, but as realists, with a strong infusion of faith.

Our cherished tradition in-forms us through the timelessly relevant answer which angel Gabriel gave to the young woman Mary: "With God, all things are possible." If, as we hope and pray, you choose to participate in our anti-war cause of nuclear abolition, then you will come to find that God's Galatian bounty of "love, joy, and peace" will be your three companion-guides along the hope-filled way, reminding us that all God asks of us, is that we do the best we can, always through divine as well as pan-national togetherness.

Co-authors of the course - Spring, 2020:

The Rev. Dr. Peter Kakos, First Churches, UCC-ABC, Northampton, MA  
E. Martin Schotz, MD, West Cummington Church, UCC, Cummington, MA  
Douglas Renick, M.Div., Haydenville Congregational Church, UCC,  
Haydenville, MA

## SESSION I: THE UCC GENERAL SYNOD RESOLUTION AND THE SCOPE OF THE PROBLEM WITH NUCLEAR WEAPONS

First of all, thank you for taking time to explore the urgent existential problem of living in a world with nuclear warhead arsenals, now in the military hands of nine nations, with possibly others to come. What we hope to accomplish in five sessions is to awaken the nuclear abolitionist inside you, prompting you to join our movement in intentionally active ways. Our goal is nothing less than remaking the world which will have disposed of every nuclear missile everywhere. If this could become a reality--and recent history proves that drastic numbers can be eliminated—this would contribute to a future worth saving for our children, and it would solve other problems such as climate change.

Why do we believe this is a real possibility? We only need go back to 1982, when the major possessor-nations, U.S. and then Soviet Union, mutually reduced the total number of warheads from roughly 70,000, to 15,000, (now about 7,000, in both Russia and the U.S.) Speaking in 2020, of this milestone, Senator Edward Markey (Mass.), reminded us that it happened “just like that!” However, it took the concerted efforts--and activism--of a decade of intense work by a Nuclear Freeze Movement, to bring it to fruition. The important point is that it happened and can be replicated with the unflinching determination of church members and/or citizens just like us. Remember the enduring Chinese proverb? “The journey of a thousand miles begins with the first step.” During these meetings, we’ll become aware that we are well on our way, with the three sisters Faith, Hope, and Love, always at our side.

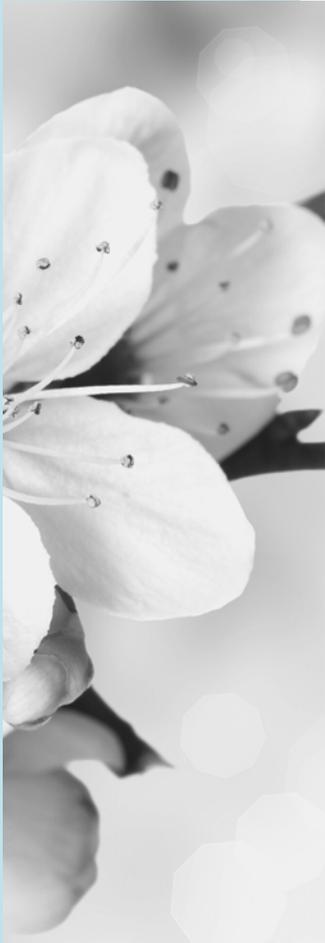
"DO UNTO OTHERS"

“*The journey of a thousand miles begins with the first step.*”

What exactly is the situation in 2020? According to the national Physicians for Social Responsibility (PSR), if only one percent--or 150--of available nuclear missiles were exploded anywhere in the world, it would not only wreak havoc on tens of millions of victims, but also give rise to a massive radioactive cloud so toxic it would drift across the globe via the earth's wind-currents in a short span of time, poisoning the air, water, and soil, for conservatively speaking an entire millennium, rendering the world as we know it, uninhabitable, virtually killing every form of animal and human life.

PSR also is quick to note that this catastrophe could very well occur without involvement by the US or Russia. For example, they point out that we can never rule out an unrestrained nuclear war between decades old enemies, Pakistan and India. Each possesses about 150 warheads. It would only take the engagement of one third from both sides, in order to bring about the unthinkable on every continent. Recognizing that available medical assistance would not even begin to meet the global need, PSR created a campaign entitled Back from the Brink: The Call to Prevent Nuclear War, calling upon congregations, municipalities, state-entities, the federal government, and educational institutions to pass their resolution consisting of five major actions (see resources Appendix I and 4).

Simultaneously, a global effort called the International Coalition Against Nuclear Weapons, ICAN, in July 2017, brought before the U.N., the proposal named the Treaty On The Prohibition Of Nuclear Weapons. It was approved by 122 nations' representatives, who were assigned the task of bringing the Treaty to their respective nations for signing and ratification by their assemblies. As of June 2020, thirty-eight nations have done so, with over fifteen pending. Once a total of fifty do so, the U.N. will find any possessor-nation guilty of breaking international law. Needless to say, all of the possessor nations have refused to agree to the process of signing and ratifying, including the U.S.



## "DO UNTO OTHERS"

Regarding our commitment as the United Church of Christ to the abolitionist cause, at the thirty second General Synod in Milwaukee in June 2019, a resolution of witness "Calling on the United States to pull 'Back from the Brink' and Prevent Nuclear War" was overwhelmingly (97%) passed (see Appendix 3). It was co-authored by the Western Mass. UCC Abolitionist Task Team of clergy and laity. Before and since that time over ten UCC churches have voted, often unanimously, to approve and act on a condensed local church version (see Appendix 4). They include congregations in Florida and New Jersey, as well as western Massachusetts. In summary, it outlines the PSR's adamant position that the U.S. must never launch a "first-strike" upon any country, including Russia. To do so would set into motion the annihilation of civilization, or omnicide. We commend each of the five Back from the Brink urgent needs to your study and action, both individually and also collectively.

The second major component calls upon us to engage, along with many other advocates, in the daunting task of pressuring our country to likewise ratify the U.N. Treaty; and to demand that the other eight possessor-nations do the same. Were this global-wide elimination of nuclear weapons a reality, our children and theirs would at least be assured that the world would not come to a radioactively contaminated end.

This Introductory session is intended to help us see the big picture, in order to explore together the crucial questions that arise from the complexities of the existence of nuclear warheads, of any size or shape. Following this, we will expose the myth of the doctrine and policy of deterrence, all of which accomplishes nothing more than further acceleration of the arms race, estimated to cost the U.S. well over a trillion dollars over ten years, all for the sake of keeping ahead of Russia, China, and North Korea. For spiritual guidance we lift up the sublime majesty of Jesus' Golden Rule:

**Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.**

It has been applied over the centuries by a myriad host of philosophers, theologians, and political scientists, regardless of the people's religion.

## "DO UNTO OTHERS"

At our fourth session, we address the interaction of the global warming crisis with the imminent threat of nuclear war. Any form of escalation would only serve to hasten virtual environmental collapse. As oceans rise, so do nations' anxious tempers, increasing the risk of dire consequences. For our Biblical foundation, we will study Isaiah's vision of the hope-filled "peaceable kingdom."

In our fifth session, we conclude with the many ways individually and together we can bring about literally life-saving change. Whether it be starting a task team within your own church, organization, college, or community, there are an infinite number of steps you can take to bring about the good news that it is possible to wake up one fine day to a world that will not be destroyed in a relative instant. In a small letter of the Epistles of John, a vision of divine innate power is given to strengthen our resolve:

Fear not, little children, for you have overcome the world.

Every session begins with a suggested Scriptural passage, to enable us to connect with the Spirit of Agape-Love, believing that now is the time to be ever aware that God is present with us every step of the way to a place God intended from the beginning. We stand on the adage that nothing is more powerful than an idea whose time has come. If nothing else, meaningful participation unites us to the unlimited inexhaustible gift of Hope.

Our first Biblical focus is the story of Christ's first resurrected appearance (according to the Gospel of John) to his now fearful followers, gathering in a room of a house in Jerusalem. The first word is in the form of the blessing: Peace, knowing full well their anxiety over their personal and collective future--that they may be the next to be crucified. In the common Greek, the word is "eirēnē," conveys a reconciliation of two opposing positions or entities, from individual to national, and beyond. It addresses in a single word a state of being where, as in this case, human confusion and utter disbelief (he has risen from the dead?) and divine will intersect.

In the context of our course of study, eirene calls upon us to see, if we can, God's plan for the entirety of humankind, specifically relating to enemies.

## "DO UNTO OTHERS"

It demands that a thorough effort be made to address, as in our case, the fear each and every possessor-nation holds, that the other side desires dominance even if it means annihilation. Once each side becomes aware that they can no longer in good conscience subject their citizenry to the possibility of extinction, then we have the optimal chance for mutual recognition of everyone's basic human need, leading us to begin to an orderly decommissioning, not only every warhead, but also every conventional intercontinental ballistic missile as well. Eirene instills in us an enduring faith that we can collaborate with every nation in building a new world-order, free of competitive demonization, free to live out our future as the peacemakers God has called upon us to be.

In a 2019, national poll, commissioned by the Nuclear Ban.US, a worldwide grassroots effort born out of the ICAN campaign, revealed that 49% of Americans would abolish nuclear arms; 31% would rather continue possession; and 20% either are not aware of the crisis, or take no position. As people of faith in a God whose soul is irenic, we believe that there also exists within our souls, made in the image of God, a life-long yearning for a world without the dire threat of a nuclear disaster from which no one will escape, hanging over us like a global guillotine, waiting for the command, which could even be given accidentally, by way of cyber security systems; from unmanned technologies; or policy-insanity. Given these real possibilities, it is high time we begin to roll up our sleeves, to do our part to create the conditions for a viable future, to build today's No Nukes Movement, not only for those we cherish, but also for the entire human family at risk every moment of every day.



## ASSIGNMENTS FOR SESSION 1

1. Read John 14:25-27. Complete this sentence: The Spirit of Peace Jesus gave us is \_\_\_\_\_ (a word, a phrase, a sentence)
2. Read the June, 2019, General Synod, UCC Resolution on the Prevention of Nuclear Weapons:  
<https://www.uccfiles.com/synod/2019/resolutions/10-Prevent-Nuclear-War.pdf>

## TASKS & QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. List three reasons why the U.S., Russia, and seven other possessor-nations continue to insist on the need for having and improving a nuclear arsenal?
2. Name three reasons why our citizens -including church members do not address the need for a multilateral disarmament and a total future ban?
3. List three reasons why our participation in the nuclear abolitionist movement is absolutely necessary for our wellbeing as well as existence?
4. Do you agree that there is a nuclear abolitionist in each of us? If so, how could we access this unlimited life-sustaining energy?

## SESSIONS 2 & 3: "DO UNTO OTHERS": THE GOLDEN RULE AND OUR CALL TO NUCLEAR ABOLITION

The following is advice for anyone who will be leading sessions 2 and 3 of the course. The goal of these two inter-related sessions is to take participants through a process that will help to clarify some of the logical complexities involved in "nuclear deterrence" and "Do unto others...." This is to be accomplished by first in session 2 introducing readers to a clear analysis of the illogic of "nuclear deterrence" and the imperative of "Do unto others..." But there is a problem. As the author discovered, the clear analysis in session 2 doesn't go far enough. As a result, in session 3 participants are taken into a deeper discussion of both topics. Thus, one can see what is lacking and therefore mistaken in the analyses provided in session 2. This deeper analysis reveals the problem of trying to separate the struggle to abolish nuclear weapons from the struggle against militarism and war. In the end one sees that to seek to abolish nuclear weapons one must also oppose the threats of conventional war as well. This involves being able to identify and counter war propaganda in general and "cold war" propaganda in particular. Important resources are provided that can help equip participants for this struggle.

In sessions 2 and 3 there are two distinct lines of analysis that participants need to explore. Each of them is rather involved. Thus, they require separate focus and discussion.

One line of analysis concerns the logical content of the concept of "nuclear deterrence." This line of analysis leads to what one might call "the logic of the nuclear age" — that what we do to "the other" will be done to us. This concept applies whether other nations or nature is "the other." We can no longer separate what we do to the other from what is done to us. Thus "Do unto others...." emerges as not only a moral imperative but also as a practical necessity.

The second line of analysis involves what it actually means to "Do unto others....". How do we apply this? The application is not as simple as it may at first appear. The application involves not only actions toward "the other," but care in how we go about understanding "the other" and understanding how "the other" sees us. This involves ongoing study and developing the capacity to listen.

## SESSION 2: NUCLEAR DETERRENCE

The goal of session 2 is to analyze the problematic nature of the concept of “nuclear deterrence” and to follow the logical implications of this analysis.

A starting point for this is an article from the website of The American Committee for East West Accord that appeared this past year. The article is entitled “The Logic of the Nuclear Age and the Illogic of US Nuclear Weapons Policy” which should be read in advance of the session.

The following are a series of conclusions that flow from the analysis presented in this article:

1. There are two distinct ways in which the term "nuclear deterrence" is used. One is the use of nuclear weapons to deter nuclear war. The other is the use of nuclear weapons to deter conventional war.
2. The article demonstrates that the idea of deterring nuclear war with nuclear weapons encounters a logical contradiction. Specifically, the analysis shows that "fighting a nuclear war in its early stages" cannot be distinguished from "deterring nuclear war" and thus the concept collapses into its opposite. The concept is thus meaningless.
3. Because the United States and Russia possess the vast majority of nuclear weapons, any progress toward worldwide nuclear disarmament must rest on the cooperation of these two major powers.
4. With regard to nuclear weapons Russia and the United States find themselves hostage to each other, in that whatever one does to the other, will be done in return.
5. As a result we arrive at the idea that the logic of the nuclear age is the Golden Rule — “Do unto others, as you would have them do unto you.” This is not only a moral imperative; it is a practical necessity.
6. In regard to deterring conventional war with nuclear weapons, the article argues that this amounts to starting a nuclear war to deter a conventional war. And the article dismisses this idea as silly.



## ASSIGNMENTS FOR SESSION 2

1. Read the article entitled "The Logic of the Nuclear Age and the Illogic of US Nuclear Weapons Policy".  
<https://eastwestaccord.com/e-martin-schotz-md-the-logic-of-the-nuclear-age-and-the-illogic-of-us-nuclear-weapons-policy/>

## TASKS & QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. What is the conventional understanding of "nuclear deterrence" in regard to nuclear war and in regard to conventional war?
2. What are the logical problems with the concept of "nuclear deterrence"?

## SESSION 3: THE GOLDEN RULE

We now enter into an attempt to understand how we go about applying the Golden Rule: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

As we begin to address this question, we might say we don't want Russia to threaten us with nuclear weapons, therefore, it is incumbent upon us not to threaten Russia with nuclear weapons. This seems to be the thinking of the two major campaigns in the US against nuclear weapons — Back From The Brink and the campaign to sign and ratify the International U.N. Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

But it is necessary to look more deeply. In the article cited above the idea of trying to deter conventional war with nuclear weapons is dismissed as silly, because it argued that this amounts to starting a nuclear war to deter conventional war. But here we come upon the problem of applying the Golden Rule superficially and thus violating the Golden Rule at a deeper level.

To a typical American "starting a nuclear war to deter conventional war" is silly, because in reality Americans are not threatened by conventional weapons. The United States is able to deter conventional war with conventional weapons alone and doesn't need nuclear weapons. to do so. The typical American would feel safer, if nuclear arsenals were abolished worldwide.

But this is not necessarily how it looks to the other side, Russia in particular. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, rather than using the end of the Cold War as an opportunity for building world peace, the United States and NATO (under the leadership of the United States) has attempt to establish a unipolar economic/political/military world order. This has involved the expansion of NATO so that Russia sees itself confronted with a vast array of conventional forces on its border. Russia, for one, definitely sees itself threatened by conventional war as well as nuclear war and sees nuclear weapons as a deterrent to the threat of a conventional attack. Furthermore, in order for nuclear weapons to be a credible deterrent to conventional war, a policy of first use of nuclear weapons is implied. Thus, under the present circumstances in its effort to deter conventional war, Russia would not renounce first use of nuclear weapons. If we look at this from the side of Russia, the effort to separate nuclear war from conventional war by the American side and to abolish only nuclear weapons appears to be a policy aimed at undermining Russian security. From the Russian point of view Americans are trying to enhance their security at the expense of Russia security -- a violation of the Golden Rule.

## SESSION 3: THE GOLDEN RULE

Once we understand how things look to Russia, we see that truly applying the Golden Rule means that we must advance measures to decrease the threat of conventional war as part of any effort to eliminate nuclear weapons.

At this point the critical reading to be discussed is the speech by President John F. Kennedy delivered at American University in 1963. In this speech President Kennedy captured in a politically sophisticated fashion the problem we have been discussing and presents a number of essential principles for successfully moving toward world peace and nuclear disarmament.

In helping participants approach the speech, the facilitator is encouraged to pose a series of questions in advance:

- What is President Kennedy's concept of peace?
- What does he see as the danger of simply calling for worldwide disarmament and universal peace?
- What alternative does President Kennedy advocate instead of a revolution in human nature?
- What is a substitute for trusting the other side to uphold a peace treaty?
- What specific unilateral step did President Kennedy announce in the speech?
- How does President Kennedy tie together domestic policy and the building of international peace?
- In what way does President Kennedy's speech reflect his practice of the Golden Rule?
- How can this speech be applied today?

### ASSIGNMENTS FOR SESSION 3

1. Read or listen to the speech by President John F. Kennedy delivered at American University in 1963.

<https://ratical.org/ratville/JFK/HWNAU/JFK061063.html>

## SESSION 4: THE INTERCONNECTIONS BETWEEN THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND NUCLEAR WEAPONS/WAR

In Session 1 we considered the dangers that nuclear weapons posed. In Session 2 we examined the logical problem of nuclear deterrence. In Session 3 we saw how it is necessary to look deeply into applying the "Golden rule." Now in Session 4 we will look at the interconnections between nuclear war and the climate emergency.

We know about the climate emergency. As Greta Thunberg has said: "Our house is on fire! Do something!" There is limited mitigation that can be done now. We are into climate chaos. It is here. Can we adapt to the changes it is bringing?

There will be millions of climate refugees. There will be food shortages. There will be pandemics with weakened or damaged health care systems. There will be huge costs of recovery from storms, flooding, wildfires. Global chains of production and food distribution will be disrupted. Civilizations may be facing possible collapse. No grid. Local food, mostly.

Michael Klare in a recent article has wrote: "What is essential and still largely missing is a recognition that climate and peace activism must be linked if the twin perils of global warming and nuclear war are to be overcome. People must understand that it will be very difficult to slow global warming unless the nuclear arms race is also slowed—and, likewise, that the risk of nuclear war will grow as long as nuclear-armed states are threatened by climate disruptions. Only by uniting our efforts toward climate and nuclear sanity in a joint campaign for human survival will it be possible to triumph over these destructive forces."

So now we have our marching orders. If our inner nuclear abolitionist is awakened and willing and able to join with others to adapt to the climate emergency and work to abolish nuclear weapons, let's join together and keep going forward.

### ASSIGNMENTS FOR SESSION 4

1. Reflect on the scripture: Isaiah 11:6-9 (the peaceable kingdom),
2. Read a summary piece on the causes and consequences of the climate emergency. Nuclear Weapons and Climate Change in the Age of Corporate Globalization by Andrew Lichterman of the Western States Legal Foundation: <http://wslfweb.org/docs/2018nukesandclimate.pdf>
3. Read the article on the interconnectedness of the climate emergency and the danger of nuclear war: Nuclear Weapons and Climate Change by Carlos Umana. <https://www.pressenza.com/2019/09/nuclear-weapons-and-climate-change/>

"DO UNTO OTHERS"

## SESSION 5: OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACTION

*Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.*

*Margaret Meade*

We introduced our course on nuclear abolition with the catastrophic example of the present Coronavirus Pandemic. We did so to reinforce the absolute life-saving value of global collaboration, if we hope to emerge intact as a civilization.

What is at the heart and soul of cooperative efforts? In a word, the PARTICIPATION of each and every "party"-including the nine possessor-nations. The mantra of these pandemic days is: "everyone must do their part." Once individuals like yourself, task-teams, focus-groups, churches, organizations, municipalities, state and federal governments begin to do so, then you and I have taken the first step of blessed response-ability.

Where to begin? Below is a brief and partial list of ways to get your feet wet before diving:

1. Continually self-educate, reading and using on-line video resources.
2. Form a task-team of three or more, in order to consider actions, and be uplifted by the fellowship of like-minded souls, all of which does wonders for staying close to sister Hope, a well-spring of resources in every season, including these especially bleak times.
3. Study our UCC's approved Synod Resolution of June 2019: *Back from the Brink*; and a sample of local church resolution versions (See Appendix 4). Heeding your church's protocols, converse with your congregation, establishing a time frame for a vote to accept.
4. Speak out through Conference-publications, and educational settings creating a workshop utilizing our five session-resources and narratives.
5. Connect to regional and national affinity-organizations, for additional resources, inspiration, and guidance. This grassroots approach is what brought the Nuclear Freeze movement of the 1980's, which to everyone's astonishment accomplished a swath of arms limitations' agreements, and massive reductions of warheads.



## "DO UNTO OTHERS"

Should all this feel overwhelming, keep in mind the Chinese proverb: the journey of a thousand miles begins with the first step, always undertaken with Spirit of peace at your side all the way.

As you make progress, also go with two of our favorite truisms:

*Nothing is more powerful than an idea whose time has come.*

And the other from the First Letter of John 5.4:

*Fear not, little children, you have overcome the world.*

**Rev. Peter Kakos**

### **NUCLEAR WEAPONS ABOLITION AND THE PEACE MOVEMENT**

In Session 3 we examined the argument that the worldwide movement to ban nuclear weapons cannot be successful, if it is separated from a broader international movement for peace. The reason for this is that under the present circumstances there are nations who feel threatened by conventional war and see the possession of nuclear weapons as a key deterrent to being attacked with conventional weapons. Without movement by the world's nations against conventional war, these threatened nations will not be willing to relinquish their nuclear arms. Thus, nuclear weapons abolition requires a process in which the nations of the world are turning away from conventional war and are enhancing the safety and security of all nations by peaceful means. The implication is that anyone who is serious about abolishing nuclear weapons must attend to and work for measures that lessen the threat of conventional war as well. National security must be sought not through violence or threats of violence, but in the development of policies and institutions for peaceful cooperation between all nations. President John F. Kennedy's speech at American University in 1963 is a seminal document in the struggle against both conventional and nuclear war. The various concepts this speech outlines are timeless and universal. For this reason, the speech merits the repeated and careful attention of anyone who seeks to be a nuclear weapons abolitionist.

**E. Martin Schotz, MD**



## ASSIGNMENTS FOR SESSION 5

- Research the organizations that are working to ban nuclear weapons. Options: [www.preventnuclearwar.org](http://www.preventnuclearwar.org) (Back from the Brink Campaign) [www.nuclearban.us](http://www.nuclearban.us) (Treaty Compliance Campaign) Note what these complimentary campaigns ask of followers. Your community of faith could join one or both of these campaigns. You will note that the General Synod resolution focuses on the Back from the Brink campaign with a mention of the U.N. Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.
- Reflect on the scripture: Proverbs 29.18 -King James Version (KJV)
- Questions to reflect on:
  - What kind of preparation and support would you and your community of faith need to take action?
  - How do you envision this coming about?
  - What steps can you take to bring it closer to reality?

## QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. What is being done in our country at this time? What are the campaigns/movements and their strategies/tactics to abolish nuclear weapons?
2. What strategies/tactics feel right for me/us? Why?
3. What can we do?
  - a. Where are we as a group and as individuals in regard to nuclear abolitionism? (Share your reflections from your homework)
  - b. What am I personally good at and what do I enjoy doing in contribution to change? What steps am I willing to take to abolish nuclear weapons?
  - c. What are we as a group willing to do? What do we see as obstacles to our taking responsibility for abolishing nuclear weapons?
  - d. What ongoing support do I/we have--through UCC or through other campaigns?
  - e. What is our next step?

## POSTSCRIPT

Friends, if you have found this course and intend to implement it, or some version of it, in your congregation please contact us for any support you need. We have discovered the power of meeting virtually using Zoom or another platform. Below are our email addresses that you can use to contact us, and we can support you on-line. Let us hear from you.

- Peter Kakos - [popkakos9@gmail.com](mailto:popkakos9@gmail.com)
- E. Martin Schotz - [eli.schotz@gmail.com](mailto:eli.schotz@gmail.com)
- Douglas Renick – [douglas.renick@gmail.com](mailto:douglas.renick@gmail.com)
- Michael Neuroth – [neurothm@ucc.org](mailto:neurothm@ucc.org)



## **APPENDIX I - NEXT STEPS AFTER SIGNING ON TO THE BFTB CAMPAIGN**

- Put the name of the faith community or other organization on the list of signers. Go to [www.preventnuclearwar.org](http://www.preventnuclearwar.org) to do this.
- Ask individual members of the faith community or other organization to individually join the BftB campaign. Go to [www.preventnuclearwar.org](http://www.preventnuclearwar.org) and click on "join the effort."
- Identify legislation (state and federal) related to the five bulleted items on the BftB. Advocate for the legislation by lobbying (meeting with the legislator, calling the legislator's office or writing letters and emails to legislators).
- Write letters to editors.
- Expand outreach to other faith communities, organizations and professional societies in your community.
- Co-sponsor/attend/organize the Hiroshima/Nagasaki remembrance event(s) in your community.
- Co-sponsor/attend any BftB resolution and UN Treaty signing events.
- Education efforts:
  - Invite someone from the local chapter of Physicians for Social Responsibility or other speakers to events at your faith community or for several faith communities in your community.
  - Share key documents, like the Back from the Brink: the Call to Prevent Nuclear War and the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, plus readable summaries of key information.
  - Handout brochures at, e.g., farmers' markets.
  - Asks members of your faith community or attendees at educational events to 'join the effort' on the [www.preventnuclearwar.org](http://www.preventnuclearwar.org) website.
  - Ask your pastor, priest, rabbi or imam to give a sermon or teach about the campaign to eliminate nuclear weapons and prevent nuclear war.
  - Form or join a study group or course/workshop on preventing nuclear war.
  - Form or join an interfaith group to sponsor someone from Physicians for Social Responsibility, following the example of Congregation B'nai Israel, Northampton, MA—wide promotion, presentation, participant interaction, Q&A, snacks and letter writing (or other action), recruitment for the campaign

## APPENDIX 2 - FROM GEORGE LAKEY, "HOW WE WIN"

- A protest – venting, outrage but not built for exerting power
- A campaign – has a target: an entity that can say “yes” to the campaign’s demand. Built for sustainability and escalation. Sustained power required for change. Campaigns give feedback so tactics can be changed and chosen. Training for the long run.
- A movement – a campaign plus a campaign plus a campaign...
- Tactics: We have hundreds to choose from. Gene Sharp wrote “The Politics of Non-violent Action.”

### SOCIAL CHANGE ROLES

1. Direct Service – eg Habitat for Humanity, Circles of Care in refugee resettlement
2. Advocate – pushing for a better policy. Lobbying, letter writing. Eg, Safe Communities Act, No Pipelines, Forest Protection, Eliminate Nuclear Weapons, Reparations – all legislation.
3. Organizer – getting people together for action, fundraising, education.
4. Rebel – disruption, e.g., boycott, divest. Blocking entrances and roads. Taking over space, e.g., sitting in a legislator’s office refusing to leave.

Conflict between roles happens. All roles needed. Support people to do what matches their temperament, skills. Support each other.

### ROADMAP TO TRANSFORMATION

1. Tell people we are creating a plan.
2. Grow connections for a new society. Step up to solve problems.
3. Organize bold non-violent, direct action campaigns
4. Unite multiple campaigns around a broad vision for replacing dysfunctional and unjust institutions.
5. Build a movement of movements powerful enough to dislodge the 1% from dominance.

"DO UNTO OTHERS"

## **APPENDIX 3 - GENERAL SYNOD RESOLUTION**

RESOLUTION Calling on the United Church of Christ to for the United States to  
Prevent Nuclear War

Submitted by: (List of Congregations)  
A Resolution of Witness

### **SUMMARY**

This resolution is offered in response to increasing international concern over the threat of nuclear war and the moral threat inherent in the existence of nuclear weapons. The expiration of nuclear treaties between the U.S. and Russia, as well as studies into the grave humanitarian impact of even a limited nuclear strike contribute to a growing urgency to address the crisis of nuclear weapons. This resolution calls on the United Church of Christ to strengthen its historic work for a world free of nuclear weapons by endorsing the Back from the Brink Campaign (BFTB) and its five principles, and issue a call for United States to ratify the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons called for in the campaign.

### **BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL RATIONALE**

As Christians, we are followers of Jesus who taught that the two greatest commandments are to love God with our heart, soul, strength and mind, and to love our neighbor as ourselves (Luke 10:27). In the biblical narrative, Jesus called his followers to show kindness and care to the "least of these" for in doing so, we care for him (Matthew 25: 35-36). God's shalom, God's peace, is a gift given to humanity (John 14:27) to be lived out in friendship and covenant with all God's people. The use of nuclear weapons is the ultimate refusal to embrace and follow these foundational commandments and teachings of our faith.

### **MUTUAL ACCOUNTABILITY**

The United Church of Christ has spoken throughout its history against the production, testing, sale, and use of nuclear weapons. In 1959, the General Synod addressed nuclear weapons by calling on churches and their members to work "For effective international control and reduction of all national armaments, including the testing of nuclear weapons." (A Call to Christian Action in Society[1]). In 1985, the United Church of Christ's Pronouncement on Affirming the United Church of Christ as a Just Peace Church declared its "opposition to all weapons of mass destruction" and called all nations to: "(1) declare that they will never use such weapons; (2) cease immediately the testing, production and deployment of nuclear weapons; (3) begin dismantling these arsenals, and; (4) while the process of dismantling is going on, negotiate comprehensive treaties banning all such future weapons by any nation." The 32nd General Synod will renew our commitment to arms control and the vision of a world without nuclear weapons.

[1] <http://uccfiles.com/synod/resolutions/CALL-TO-CHRISTIAN-ACTION-IN-SOCIETY.pdf>

## "DO UNTO OTHERS"

### INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY

The 32nd General Synod of the United Church of Christ will request that all churches, associations, conferences, and associated bodies of the United Church of Christ consider how to implement this resolution with the support and encouragement of the Covenanted Ministries.

### PROBABILITY OF INFLUENCING SOCIAL CHANGE

On July 7th 2017, the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW)[2] was adopted by 122 member states, and was opened for signature. This treaty was brought in response to growing awareness among UN member states of the dire humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons. The TPNW treaty creates a legally binding mechanism to prohibit nuclear weapons or any nuclear weapon activities including the development, testing, purchasing, possession, use, or threatening of their use. It will enter into force when 50 nations ratify it. As of November 2018, the treaty has 69 signatories and 19 states parties that have ratified it.

In 2018, the “Back from the Brink: The Call to Prevent Nuclear War” national grassroots movement issued a call to faith communities and civil society groups to work together toward a fundamental change in U.S. nuclear weapons policy by creating political will for the U.S. to ratify the TPNW treaty, and endorsing five common-sense steps:

1. Renouncing the option of using nuclear weapons first
2. Ending the sole, unchecked authority of any U.S. president to launch a nuclear attack
3. Taking U.S. nuclear weapons off hair-trigger alert
4. Cancelling the plan to replace its entire nuclear arsenal with enhanced weapons
5. Actively pursuing a verifiable agreement among nuclear-armed states to eliminate their nuclear arsenals

This campaign has the endorsement of many national faith groups, non-governmental organizations, and a growing number of cities that have passed statements of support, such as the state of California and the cities of Baltimore, Los Angeles and others. Now is the time to stand up, join with other people of conscience and faith in our nation and around the world to take action to abolish all nuclear weapons.

### TEXT OF MOTION

WHEREAS, in our scriptures we read that “where there is no vision, the people perish” (Proverbs 29:18); and

[2] [https://treaties.un.org/doc/Treaties/2017/07/20170707%2003-42%20PM/Ch\\_XXVI\\_9.pdf](https://treaties.un.org/doc/Treaties/2017/07/20170707%2003-42%20PM/Ch_XXVI_9.pdf)

## "DO UNTO OTHERS"

WHEREAS, in 2018 the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists moved the Doomsday Clock ahead by 30 seconds — to 11:58 p.m. A symbolic gesture suggesting that civilization is two minutes away from destruction; and

WHEREAS, the 12th General Synod of the United Church of Christ passed a pronouncement “Reversing the Arms Race”; and

WHEREAS, the 15th General passed a pronouncement declaring the United Church of Christ a “Just Peace Church” that declared opposition to all weapons of mass destruction, calling for the immediate cessation of testing, production, and deployment of such arsenals; and

WHEREAS, 95 percent of the world’s nuclear weapons are in the hands of the United State and Russia and the rest are held by seven other countries: China, France, Israel, India, North Korea, Pakistan, and the United Kingdom[3]; and

WHEREAS, since the height of the Cold War, the United States and Russia have dismantled more than 50,000 nuclear warheads, but 15,000 of these weapons still exist and pose an intolerable risk to human survival; and

WHEREAS, the use of even a tiny fraction of these weapons would cause worldwide climate disruption and global famine; and

WHEREAS, a large scale nuclear war would kill hundreds of millions of people directly and cause unimaginable environmental damage[4] and catastrophic climate disruption; and

WHEREAS, as the effects of climate change place increased stress on communities around the world and intensify the likelihood of conflict, the danger of nuclear war will grow[5]; and

WHEREAS, despite assurances that these arsenals exist solely to guarantee that they are never used, there have been many occasions when nuclear armed states have prepared to use these weapons, and war has been averted only at the last minute[6]; and

WHEREAS, the planned expenditure of more than \$1 trillion to enhance our nuclear arsenal will not only increase the risk of nuclear disaster but fuel a global arms race and divert crucial resources needed to assure the well-being of the American people and people all over the world[7]; and

[3] <https://fas.org/issues/nuclear-weapons/status-world-nuclear-forces/>

[4] <http://www.psr.org/assets/pdfs/projected-us-casualties-and-destruction.pdf>

[5] <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/once-again-climate-change-cited-as-trigger-for-war/>

[6] <http://www.ucsusa.org/sites/default/files/attach/2015/04/Close%20Calls%20with%20Nuclear%20Weapons.pdf>

[7] <https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/USNuclearModernization>

## "DO UNTO OTHERS"

WHEREAS, there is an alternative to this march to nuclear war: in July 2017, 122 nations called for the elimination of all nuclear weapons by adopting the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons[8].

WHEREAS, in 2018 the U.S. has expressed its intent to exit the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, a critical agreement to curtail nuclear weapons; and

Whereas, living into the United Church of Christ' current mission statement to "Build a just world for all" will necessitate the elimination of nuclear weapons;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the United Church of Christ endorses the Back from the Brink: The Call to Prevent Nuclear War campaign, and calls upon policymakers to take common sense policy measures to prevent nuclear war by:

- renouncing the option of using nuclear weapons first;
- ending the president's sole, unchecked authority to launch a nuclear attack;
- taking US nuclear weapons off hair-trigger alert;
- cancelling the plan to replace its entire arsenal with enhanced weapons; and
- actively pursuing a verifiable agreement among nuclear armed states to eliminate their nuclear arsenals.[9]

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the General Synod of the United Church of Christ calls on upon our federal leaders to ratify the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons[10] and make nuclear disarmament the centerpiece of our national security policy, and instructs all settings of the church to convey this to U.S. policymakers.

### FUNDING

The funding for the implementation of the Resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

### IMPLEMENTATION

The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries or other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

[8] <http://www.icanw.org/treaty-on-the-prohibition-of-nuclear-weapons/>

[9] <http://www.preventnuclearwar.org>

[10] [www.nuclearban.us](http://www.nuclearban.us)

"DO UNTO OTHERS"

## APPENDIX 4 - MODEL LOCAL CHURCH RESOLUTION

\_\_\_\_\_ Church, UCC  
(Church address)

The \_\_\_\_\_ Church adopts the following resolution.

### A RESOLUTION

#### Calling for the United States to Prevent Nuclear War

WHEREAS, where there is no vision, the people perish (Proverbs 29:18) and

WHEREAS, the peace that Jesus proclaims (John 14:27) is one of irenic reconciliation on every level— international, as well as interpersonal and

WHEREAS, Jesus calls those who work for peace God’s own daughters and sons (Matthew 5: 9) and

WHEREAS, we are followers of Jesus who taught that the two greatest commandments were to love God with heart, soul, strength and mind and to love our neighbor as ourselves (Luke 10:27) and

WHEREAS, Jesus also taught that whoever shows kindness and care to the “least of these” does it also for him (Matthew 25: 35-36) and

WHEREAS, it is clear that the use of nuclear weapons is the ultimate refusal to embrace and follow these foundational commandments and teachings of our faith. Now is the time to stand up, join with others in our nation and around the world to abolish all nuclear weapons forever and

WHEREAS, since the height of the Cold War, the United States and Russia have dismantled more than 50,000 nuclear warheads, but 15,000 of these weapons still exist and pose an intolerable risk to human survival; and

WHEREAS, 95 percent of these weapons are in the hands of the United State and Russia and the rest are held by seven other countries: China, France, Israel, India, North Korea, Pakistan, and the United Kingdom[11]; and

[11] <https://fas.org/issues/nuclear-weapons/status-world-nuclear-forces/>

## "DO UNTO OTHERS"

WHEREAS, the use of even a tiny fraction of these weapons would cause worldwide climate disruption and global famine; to wit, as few as 100 Hiroshima sized bombs, small by modern standards, would put at least 5 million tons of soot into the upper atmosphere and cause climate disruption across the planet, cutting food production and putting 2 billion people at risk of starvation[12]; and

WHEREAS, a large scale nuclear war would kill hundreds of millions of people directly and cause unimaginable environmental damage[13] and catastrophic climate disruption dropping temperatures across the planet to levels not seen since the last ice age; under these conditions the vast majority of the human race would starve and it is possible we would become extinct as a species[14]; and

WHEREAS, despite assurances that these arsenals exist solely to guarantee that they are never used, there have been many occasions when nuclear armed states have prepared to use these weapons, and war has been averted only at the last minute[15]; and

WHEREAS, former Defense Secretary Robert McNamara said, speaking about the Cuban Missile Crisis, "It was luck that prevented nuclear war," yet our nuclear policy cannot be the hope that luck will continue; and

WHEREAS, as the effects of climate change place increased stress on communities around the world and intensify the likelihood of conflict, the danger of nuclear war will grow[16]; and

WHEREAS, the planned expenditure of more than \$1 trillion to enhance our nuclear arsenal will not only increase the risk of nuclear disaster but fuel a global arms race and divert crucial resources needed to assure the well-being of the American people and people all over the world[17]; and

WHEREAS, there is an alternative to this march to nuclear war: in July 2017, 122 nations called for the elimination of all nuclear weapons by adopting the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons[18].

[12] <http://www.psr.org/assets/pdfs/two-billion-at-risk.pdf>

[13] <http://www.psr.org/assets/pdfs/projected-us-casualties-and-destruction.pdf>

[14] <http://climate.envsci.rutgers.edu/pdf/RobockNW2006JD008235.pdf>

[15] <http://www.ucsusa.org/sites/default/files/attach/2015/04/Close%20Calls%20with%20Nuclear%20Weapons.pdf>

[16] <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/once-again-climate-change-cited-as-trigger-for-war/>

[17] <https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/USNuclearModernization>

[18] <http://www.icanw.org/treaty-on-the-prohibition-of-nuclear-weapons/>

[17] <http://www.preventnuclearwar.org>

[18] [www.nuclearban.us](http://www.nuclearban.us)

"DO UNTO OTHERS"

BE IT RESOLVED that the \_\_\_\_\_ Church, in \_\_\_\_\_, calls upon our federal leaders and our nation to spearhead a global effort to prevent nuclear war by affirming Back from the Brink: The Call to Prevent Nuclear War:

- renouncing the option of using nuclear weapons first;
- ending the president's sole, unchecked authority to launch a nuclear attack;
- taking US nuclear weapons off hair-trigger alert;
- canceling the plan to replace its entire arsenal with enhanced weapons; and
- actively pursuing a verifiable agreement among nuclear armed states to eliminate their nuclear arsenals.[19]

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the \_\_\_\_\_ Church calls upon our federal leaders and our nation to embrace the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons[20] and make nuclear disarmament the centerpiece of our national security policy.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the \_\_\_\_\_ Church will work to become aligned with the U.N. Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the \_\_\_\_\_ Church shall cause a copy of the resolution to be sent to:

- State Senate President and State House of Representatives Speaker
- State Representative and State Senator
- U.S. Representative, U.S. Senators
- President Donald J. Trump
- Minister and President of the UCC Conference
- Associate Conference Minister, UCC Conference

[19] <http://www.preventnuclearwar.org>

[20] [www.nuclearban.us](http://www.nuclearban.us)

"DO UNTO OTHERS"

## **APPENDIX 5 - SCRIPTURE PASSAGES FOR ALL SECTIONS**

### **Scripture Explored in the Course...**

#### **“Do Unto Others”: The Golden Rule and Our Call to Nuclear Abolition**

*(New Revised Standard Version)*

##### **Session 1: John 14:25-27**

I have said these things to you while I am still with you. But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid.

##### **Session 2 & 3: Matthew 7:12**

In everything do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets.

##### **Session 4: Isaiah 11:6-9**

The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them.

The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den.

They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain; for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

##### **Session 5:**

Without a vision, the people perish.      -Proverbs 29.18 -King James Version (KJV)

(This Wisdom-saying helps us to keep in mind how crucial it is to stay focused on our goal of world peace, beginning with the global abolition of nuclear weapons.)

"DO UNTO OTHERS"

## **APPENDIX 6 - RESOURCES (BOOKS, ARTICLES, VIDEOS, WEBSITES)**

### **BOOKS**

Ellsberg, Daniel, *The Doomsday Machine*. 2017: Bloomsbury, NY.  
 Brown, Kate, *Manual For Survival (A Chernobyl guide to the future)*. 2019: Norton, NY.

### **VIDEOS**

Chernobyl, 2019: HBO series.

### **WEBSITES**

ICAN - [icanw.org](http://icanw.org)  
 ICAN in the US - [nuclearban.us](http://nuclearban.us)  
 PSR - [psr.org](http://psr.org)  
 IPPNW - [ippnw.org](http://ippnw.org)  
 Nuclear Age Foundation - [wagingpeace.org](http://wagingpeace.org)  
 Global Zero - [globalzero.org](http://globalzero.org)  
 US Committee for East West Exchange-[eastwestaccord.com](http://eastwestaccord.com)  
 Union of Concerned Scientists -- [.ucsusa.org](http://.ucsusa.org)  
 Win Without War -- [winwithoutwar.org](http://winwithoutwar.org)  
 World Beyond War -- [worldbeyondwar.org](http://worldbeyondwar.org)  
 Women's International League for Peace and Freedom- [wilpf.org](http://wilpf.org)  
 Code Pink - [codepink.org](http://codepink.org)  
 Veterans for Peace - [veteransforpeace.org](http://veteransforpeace.org)  
 Nuclear Threat Initiative - [nti.org](http://nti.org)  
 Peace Action - [peaceaction.org](http://peaceaction.org)  
 Center for Citizens Initiatives (US/Russia exchange visits) - [ccisf.org](http://ccisf.org)  
 American Friends Service Committee - [afsc.org](http://afsc.org)  
 Witness for Peace - [witnessforpeace.org](http://witnessforpeace.org)  
 Sister City Program - [sistercities.org](http://sistercities.org)  
 Partners in Health - [pic.org](http://pic.org)  
 The UN Foundation - [unfoundation.org](http://unfoundation.org)  
 Greenpeace - [greenpeace.org](http://greenpeace.org)  
 National Priorities Project - [nationalpriorities.org](http://nationalpriorities.org)  
 Friends of the Earth. - [foe.org](http://foe.org)  
 NO to NATO - [no-to-nato.org](http://no-to-nato.org)  
 Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament - [cnduk.org](http://cnduk.org)  
 The Parents Circle - [theparentscircle.org](http://theparentscircle.org)  
 Peace Now - [peacenow.org](http://peacenow.org)  
 Pastors For Peace - [ifconews.org](http://ifconews.org)