



Photo by Karen Marysdaughter

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24th Annual HOPE Festival Saturday, April 7th

SAVE THE DATE

This year's HOPE Festival (Helping Organize Peace Earth-wide) will be held on Saturday, April 7th from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the University of Maine Student Recreation and Fitness Center in Orono. Each year we come together at the HOPE Festival to celebrate diverse efforts for social change happening across Maine. We encourage Center members to get involved in planning and promoting our largest annual event.

Coordinated by the Peace and Justice Center of Eastern Maine and supported by the University of Maine Peace and Reconciliation Studies program, the HOPE Festival brings together around 70 progressive organizations working on building peace, social justice, and a sustainable environment. The annual HOPE Festival offers these groups the chance to share information about their work and network with others. In addition to enjoying local food and a family area, the public gets a chance to learn how they can become involved in social justice efforts in their community.

More than ever we recognize that banding together in group efforts around our common values is necessary for progress. The Festival is an opportunity to advance progressive movement-building in our community by making visible the shared values between groups working individually toward particular social justice goals. The HOPE Festival benefits the public, participating organizations, and the University community by creating a venue to generate connections and pursue collaboration.

We are now accepting applications for organizations who want to take part in the tabling fair or children's area, food vendors who are interested in having a *free* space in the food court to sell items, as well as accepting forms for program advertisements and sponsorships that come with a variety of benefits. FMI, please call: email Amy Hughes at hughesae@gmail.com or call (207) 942-9343. We are eager to hear from you!

MLK birthday commemoration

Nonviolent resistance a year after Trump elected

by Ilze Petersons

Sunday, January 14, 2018 3:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

(snow date Monday, January 15)

Unitarian Universalist Society of Bangor

120 Park Street, Bangor

After a dangerous year of Trump policies, join us to celebrate resistance efforts and explore how to increase our combined capacity based on values of cooperation and collaboration. Representatives from local progressive groups will gather to share actions and priorities based on human needs and to affirm the power of our diverse but united efforts.

This past year we have seen even more clearly how racism is used to divide and divert people from understanding and challenging the systemic roots of growing inequality and injustice. Does each of our varied efforts challenge racism in some way? How does the legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr. help us to explore what more we can do?

A true revolution of values will soon cause us to question the fairness and justice of many of our past and present policies. ... True compassion is more than flinging a coin to a beggar. It comes to see that an edifice which produces beggars needs restructuring... A nation that continues year after year to spend more money on military defense than on programs of social uplift is approaching spiritual death.

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Riverside Church Speech April 7, 1967

Representatives from the Greater Bangor NAACP, Partners for Peace, Veterans for Peace, Maine AllCare, Indivisible, Maine People's Alliance, Islamic Center of Maine, Unitarian Universalist Society of Bangor Social Justice Committee, University of Maine Multicultural Center, Pax Christi, Community Union of Ellsworth, Resources for Organizing and Social Change (ROSC), Bangor High School Women's' Interest Group, Peace & Justice Center of Eastern Maine, the Maine Peace Action Committee, and others will each give a short



presentation on how their efforts can be related to the King quote above and our shared efforts against racism. Then join the discussion about how we can continue to collaborate to be a diverse but unified force for peace, justice, and sustainability. We will conclude with a potluck supper and sing-along with "The Marx Brothers and Sister". To help us plan, please let PJC know if you will be joining us.



In honor, in memory

Many thanks for the following donations in memory and honor of loved ones:

In honor of Silas Brogunier, from Michele Brogunier



Is the P&J Center in your view?

by Kay Carter

I trust it is. All of us who receive this newsletter and rely on the Peace and Justice Center know that we can count on the staff, the volunteers, and the programs of the Center to magnify our concerns, whether through collaboration with other progressive organizations, education about issues, direct action, media relations, or community building.

I write you now as a member of the Steering Committee of the P&J Center to encourage you to help the Center with whatever financial support you can afford. Like you I suspect, I get multiple requests to support other organizations at this time of year. The P & J Center has always been pretty low key in asking for support, sending one or two letters a year to report on its work and to ask your help in keeping the Center fiscally strong. This year our donations are running behind previous years. We need your help to turn this around.

Drum roll please.... We have a new way for folks to donate, either one time or monthly. It is very easy to go to the Peace and Justice web site (peacectr.org) and set up a contribution to the Center. The amount of the contribution is up to you.

To do this:

- * Go to the web site (peacectr.org).
- * Click on the green 'Donate' button on the top left.
- * Follow the directions.

Any contribution is appreciated, one time or monthly. Several people have been using the monthly contribution feature to support the Center throughout the year. It is easy, does not require a monthly check, and assures that the Center has on-going support for its operations. I do it. Will you join me?



Does tax legislation serve common good?

by Reverend Rebecca Liberty, Redeemer Lutheran Church

As a Lutheran evaluating the Republican tax reform plan, I must ask, "Does this tax legislation serve the common good? Does it help poor, hungry and vulnerable populations?" Sadly, the answer to both questions is no.

My denomination, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), follows a decision-making framework developed almost 20 years ago: "Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All." The title summarizes our moral imperative: to work toward an economy in which all can meet their basic needs and flourish. Guided by the Bible and our Lutheran tradition that teaches our purpose is to love and serve our neighbor, a national assembly of Lutherans adopted this statement to direct our participation in public economic life.

So I ask: Does this tax bill serve the common good? The answer is no: these changes concentrate even more wealth among the wealthiest 1% and corporations. Does it help our neighbors who are most vulnerable because of age, health, or income? The answer is no, thanks to provisions regarding health insurance, student loan interest, and others. The reductions of more than \$1 trillion in revenue will result in cuts to needed programs like Medicare and Medicaid.

I share the belief articulated in the ELCA statement that "Government is intended to serve God's purposes by limiting or countering narrow economic interests and promoting the common good. Paying taxes to enable government to carry out these and other purposes is an appropriate expression of our stewardship in society, rather than something to be avoided. Government often falls short of these responsibilities." Senator Collins, I urge you to oppose the current tax reform bill. In one of the wealthiest nations in the world, we have a responsibility to pursue an *equitable* tax code that leads to a sufficient, sustainable livelihood for all.

Taken from Pastor Liberty's remarks at a press conference at the P&J Center on November 30, 2017



Avoiding Nuclear War

by Elliot Benjamin, Ph.D., member of Indivisible Bangor

I am very concerned that the actions of President Trump in regard to both North Korea and Iran are leading us into unimaginable horrors of a nuclear war. There is no doubt that the dangers to the United States

from North Korea's and Iran's development of nuclear weapons are tremendously alarming. However, I believe that President Trump is making the situation far more dangerous by his reckless and threatening tweets regarding North Korea, and his declaration to pull the United States out of the Iran nuclear agreement. At the 11/14/17 Senate Foreign Relations Committee meeting devoted to the topic of the first strike nuclear war issue, concerns were brought up by Senator Chris Murphy that President Trump is too unstable, volatile, and quixotic in his decision-making to be trusted with making a decision unilaterally about a first strike nuclear attack.

There have been a number of bills submitted to Congress that would restrict any U.S. president from launching an initial nuclear strike without a declaration of war from Congress, as well as bills restricting the funding and authorization for any preemptive strike on North Korea without Congressional approval. However, the military and government speakers at two recent meetings of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee expressed serious concerns about changing the first strike legislation, which they see as a necessary deterrent for our country's self-defense.

Therefore, I propose that the most effective course of action is to establish concrete formulations of what constitutes "imminent danger" to justify a first strike nuclear attack. This way, in addition to hopefully reducing the likelihood that a U.S. president would ever give an illegal first strike nuclear order, it would also increase the likelihood that a high-ranking military or government officer might disobey such an order if there were legal benchmarks in place to judge whether or not 'imminent danger' existed. Establishing agreed-upon formulations delineating justifications for nuclear war would go a long way in avoiding such a catastrophic scenario.



Say NO to General Dynamics tax breaks

by Bruce K. Gagnon, coordinator of the Global Network Against Weapons & Nuclear Power in Space.

General Dynamics, which owns Bath Iron Works, is asking the Maine Legislature for a \$60 million tax break over the next 20 years for their operation in Bath to "stay competitive." General Dynamics has already received more than \$200 million in state and local tax breaks for BIW. In 2013 GD asked for \$6.3 million in tax breaks from the city of Bath. A local group organized in opposition, and the City Council cut the

tax break to \$3.7 million, saving the community \$2.6 million that could be used for other local needs. Like most weapons corporations, GD gets the vast majority of its operating funds from the U.S. Treasury. But then the military-industrial complex adds a strategy to extract even greater profit from taxpayers by going to the states demanding more tax breaks. The company pits one state against another, claiming that if they don't get tax breaks in Maine and can't maintain their operations here, then they will move elsewhere.

The Providence (Rhode Island) Journal recently reported that General Dynamics spent \$9.4 billion buying back its own stock from 2013 to 2016. And last year General Dynamics CEO, Phebe Novakovic was paid \$21 million (including a \$5 million bonus). These are not the actions of a corporation struggling to stay competitive. We demand that our state legislators oppose this corporate welfare giveaway. Let General Dynamics take back the extravagant salaries and bonuses from their top executives before they come poor-mouthing to our state treasury.

This article is abridged for publication here from a piece that ran in the Portland Press Herald on Dec 4, 2017



No Is Not Enough by Naomi Klein

"A state of shock is produced when a story is ruptured, when we have no idea what's going on. But in so many ways explored in these pages, Trump is not a rupture at all, but rather the culmination of a great many dangerous stories our culture has been telling for a very long time." So even if we could go back in time to change the results of the 2016 election, we'd only be putting the proverbial bandaid on a rapidly growing cancer. Naomi Klein says it's time to move on already. And she helps us to do just that.

For one thing, *No Is Not Enough* gives readers the big picture. Secondly, Klein gives us a mandate. There is no Superman. Citizenship has to mean more than campaigning every couple of years. No more legislative outsourcing! We have to be the change we need. Rather than arguing with the other players, we must communicate, listen, and compromise.

Most importantly, Klein tells us we must be bold and pro-active. If we only react to crises as they pop up, our best-case scenario will be an endless, unwinnable game of whack-a-mole. We must decide what kind of world we want for ourselves, our children, and generations yet unborn.

~ reviewed by J. Hathaway



With thanks to our donors

The Peace & Justice Center of Eastern Maine is grateful to our many supporters, listed below. If you would like to join them, send your response to the Center using the coupon on page 5. **Thank you!** Your gifts ensure that we have a progressive hub of activism in Eastern Maine.

If your name does not appear, it may be that your donation came in after we went to print or because you haven't indicated you would be willing to have your name publicized. If you would be willing to have your name listed, please let our office manager Karen Marysdaughter know.

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Thank You All!



Photo by Karen Marysdaughter

notices

Rally of Unity : On January 3, 2018, from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. the Sixth Annual Alliance for The Common Good Rally of Unity will be held at the Statehouse Hall of Flags in Augusta on the opening day of the legislative session. The hall has been reserved from 9:00 till 1:00 with 15 tables reserved for group displays, posters, and handouts. Speakers will begin at 10 a.m.. This year's list of speakers is diverse and focused on Sustainability. The emcee for the event is Jim Freeman. FMI, contact Jim at packratjimf@gmail.com or 207-570-4145. Planning is ongoing and at this time speakers and topics include:

- * Penobscot Nation efforts to preserve their ancestral water rights on the Penobscot River - John Banks
- * Nestle Corporation water extraction - Nickie Sekera
- * Food sovereignty legislation update - Betsy Garrold
- * Small sustainable farming in Maine - Heather Retberg
- * Protecting Maine's water resources from metallic mining update - Hendrik Gideonse
- * Threats to the Penobscot River due to Juniper Ridge Landfill expansion - Ed Spencer
- * East / West Corridor Update - TBD
- * The Peoples Veto referendum signature effort concerning Ranked Choice Voting - TBD
- * Establishment of a Maine State Community Bank

The Rally of Unity is organized by the Alliance for the Common Good, an ad-hoc coalition assembling as a unified front under the theme "Maine the Possible" to give voice to ordinary people and to push back against corporate dominance in government.

Sacred Instructions: Indigenous Wisdom for Living Spirit-Based Change

Sherri Mitchell draws from Indigenous knowledge and ancestral wisdom, as well as her experience as a lawyer and activist, to address some of the most crucial issues we face today. Sharing the gifts she has received from the elders of her tribe, the Penobscot Nation, she asks us to look deeply into the illusions we have labeled as truth which separate us from our higher mind and from one another. *Sacred Instructions* explains how our traditional stories set the framework for our belief systems, and urges us to decolonize our language and stories. It reveals how the removal of women from our stories has impacted our thinking and disrupted the natural balance within our communities. For those who seek to create change, this book lays out an ancient world view and set of cultural values that provide a balanced, humane way of life that can heal Mother Earth, and preserve our communities for future generations.

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Mission Statement

...to support as well as link individuals and groups concerned with peace, social justice, and environmental issues. Center services promote cooperation, expand awareness, explore connections, and encourage community involvement in working toward a peaceful and just society. The Center also develops programs in response to those community concerns not being adequately addressed by existing social change organizations.

To support the work of the P&J Center of Eastern Maine, my check for \$ _____ is enclosed.

The Center is a non-profit membership organization registered in the state of Maine, but donations are not tax-exempt. To make a tax-exempt donation, make your check payable to ROSC and write "P&J" in the memo line. You can make a donation online at www.peacectr.org. Donations made online are automatically paid through ROSC and are tax deductible.

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