



New Garden Community Church (Unitarian Universalist) - a labor-peace church

312-405-9470 ♦ minister@NewGardenUU.org ♦ www.NewGardenUU.org

meeting at 6pm, UE (United Electrical workers), 37 S. Ashland, Chicago

March 1, 2007

"Love for the Earth, Justice for the People"

Calendar:

- **Sunday, March 4, 6pm** – Jean muses on **"Wandering in the Desert"** – when life slaps us upside the head, where do we turn? Potluck follows all services.

Spirituality Book Discussion Group

Tuesday, March 6, 6-8pm – Come discuss the *Life of Pi*, by Yann Martel, winner of the Mann Booker Prize, 2002. Meet at the back table, Westgate Coffeehouse, 924 W. Madison. Y'all come!

- **Sunday, March 11, 6pm** – The **First Person** series continues with **Mark Lickerman** talking about **"My Path as a Spiritual Warrior."**
- **Tuesday, March 13 & 27, 7pm** - Nonviolent Communication (**NVC**) practice continues. If you want to learn to cool your hot temper or stiffen your spine, phone Jean for info: 312-405-9470.
- **Sunday, March 18, 6pm** – on the eve of the 4th anniversary of the U.S. invasion of Iraq, a special program for the **Season for Nonviolence**: **Ray Parrish**, of Veterans for Peace, speaks on **"Conscience and War: Resistance vs. PTSD."**
- **Sunday, March 25, 6pm** – for Film Night, we continue the **peace/nonviolence** series with **"A Force More Powerful"** – a documentary on nonviolent direct action, followed by discussion. Bring food, we'll eat and watch together.

Warriors and Kings

Like millions of other Americans, I'm fed up with our Chief Executive ignoring every bit of feedback we give him, and ploughing ahead with his bellicose plans, just as he did before we invaded Iraq. The disingenuity of his people is astonishing: Administration spokespeople claiming that just because the build-up before Iraq looked just the same as this current build-up, it doesn't mean we will invade Iran. "Policies have changed! Mistakes have been corrected!"

And the Democrats are afraid to do the only thing they can do – cut funding – because they will then look bad when the military won't deliver body armor or soap or toilet paper to the troops (ignoring that they could take the money from some other part of their enormous, bloated budget).

It's especially galling when the U.S. budget as proposed by Pres. Bush cuts funding for social programs, including CHIP, the Children's Health Insurance Program for children of the working poor, at a cost that's a drop in the bucket of the Defense budget. Daniel Shore joked, deadpan, that this program should become part of the Defense budget, so these children could grow up strong and healthy for future wars.

During a similar build-up of the military during the Reagan era, my brother the therapist joked that he needed a defense contract, since there wasn't any money anywhere else.

Perhaps the time is here when we need to take drastic action – refuse to pay taxes, for example. Voices for Creative Nonviolence is organizing sit-ins in Congressional offices, to try to force our Representatives and Senators to do the right thing – cut the funding, that is. Contact them at vcnv.org to find out what's next.

The American people, we're told, don't like the war or the policy, but they are afraid of what will happen if funding is cut – troops without ammunition, or if the troops are withdrawn, a bloodbath in the wake of our leaving the country. More than one proposal in Congress outlines a plan for withdrawing troops from Iraq while maintaining a presence to assist with rebuilding the country, helping to make up for the damage we've done – reparations of a sort.

How amazed and relieved I was to hear about the regional summit planned for March – the countries there planned it, in spite of U.S. opposition to such a summit. It reminds me of what Lech Walesa said about Poland before the Communist government fell – how they simply had to act as if they were free – such actions were in themselves freeing.

If the powers that be are acting to stop you from exercising your freedoms, then like Martin Luther King or Gandhi you can publicly integrate the lunch counter or march across the bridge. If the powers that be are taking aggressive action against others, then how do you stop them, nonviolently? You can stand in front of the bulldozers or the tanks as in the West Bank or Tiananmen Square. You can poke a stick into the military recruitment efforts by practicing "peace recruitment" – the Chicago Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR, a venerable religious peace group) is holding a discussion on it next Monday. (see www.myspace.com/FORChicago)

In a wistful moment of reflection this morning, I asked a friend – a former Special Forces soldier in Somalia in 1993 – "If we can ever put an end to war –" ("That'll never happen," he said) "then what will we do with..." "With the warriors?" he finished my question.

"People asked the minister of my church how someone like me is safe to be working with the children. He answered them: If you had some diamonds, and a poodle, a German Shepherd, and a pit bull, which one would you put the diamonds with? If you put them with the poodle, someone will take the diamonds and the poodle. If you put them with the German Shepherd, they'll be half safe. If you put them with the pit bull, they'll be 100% safe. You put a warrior with children, all the anger evaporates – they are your precious possession, and you guard them with your life."

The Warrior is an archetype whose role is protection. But it is just one part of an integrated whole; it needs to be under the command of the Good King, who thinks of the good of all the people. The Declaration of Independence reads, "*when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object evinces a design to reduce [the people] under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security.*" I think it's time. We need to embody the Good King ourselves and end the tyranny of the Warrior.

peace, Jean

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