

International Ecumenical Peace Convocation WCC Kingston Jamaica.

Guide our feet into the way of peace

Luke 1:79

“And it came to pass that in the year of our Lord, 2011, the Global Church gathered and abided in the city of Kingston, Jamaica, to celebrate the triumph of peace over violence and righteousness over injustice”

Order of celebration World Sunday for Peace

Sunday May 22, Kingston, Jamaica

From 17 th to 25 th of May we were gathered for the International Ecumenical Peace Convocation at Kingston. Some 1000 participants from over 100 different nations, representing the more than 300 member churches of the World council of Churches. There was a good representation from Asia, Africa and Latin America. There was a good balance between women and men, clergy and lay, older and younger participants (the youngsters noted that they made up at least 17% of the population!).

There was a modest, but good presence of delegates from the Historic Peace Churches: some 10 Quakers and all in all a little more than 30 Mennonites, Quakers and Brethren.

We gathered at the Campus of the University of the West Indies, simple but adequate student quarters for each of us, surrounded by nice hillsides, strewn with beautiful flowering trees.

Plenary sessions were held in an enormous tent on the site.

We were welcomed by the prime minister of Jamaica, the general secretary of the Caribbean Council of Churches (in the four languages: English, Spanish, French and Dutch - hinting at the colonial heritage!), the president of the Jamaican council of Churches and the president of the World Council of Churches.

We started the 18 th of May with an opening service and throughout the days we were together the plenary worship and the small bible study groups (base groups) were an important foundation for our shared work. Since the Caribbean and Jamaican Councils of Churches as hosts were responsible for the worship services, lots of beautiful and inspiring songs were sung, lots of spirited rhythm was present in these celebrations. We joyfully sang in English, Spanish, French and even Swahili ('Bwana Utupe Amani' - Lord give us peace), we sang well-known Caribbean songs like 'By the rivers of Babylon' and also a song especially written for the occasion by a Jamaican artist, Grub Cooper, 'Glory to God and Peace on Earth'. Furthermore there were plenary sessions and a great many workshops (some 160!) addressing the theme.

At the opening session several speakers gave introductory talks. Amongst them Margot Kässman (Evangelical Church of Germany). Amongst else she said: *“The message of the New Testament is very clear. In his Sermon on the Mount Jesus opens a whole set of new categories. It is not the warriors, the heroes and the fighters, the strong and the brave who are blessed. No, it is the poor in spirit, those who mourn, the meek and those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, the merciful, the pure in heart: the peacemakers.”* She went on to voice out that the end of the Decade to Overcome Violence that we had come to close here at Kingston *“should mark a new beginning”* which would need *“clear theological convictions that violence is in no regard to be legitimized by religion. There are two billion Christians in*

this world. If they radically stand up for non-violence, dare to dream of a world without violence, it would definitely make a difference. Peace be with you....”

The keynote speaker at this opening session was Paul Oestreicher, lifelong peace activist, Anglican priest as well as a member of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers). His contribution was well received by the plenary meeting and entitled: ‘A New World is Possible’. He started saying “*Wherever you have come from, whatever your church tradition, you may be Orthodox or Catholic, Protestant or Charismatic, Evangelical or Liberal, Conservative or Radical, all of us have come here because we wish to be friends of Jesus, rabbi and more than a prophet. To each one of us he says: You are my friends, if you do what I command you. This I command you, to love one another as I have loved you...”*

But he said: “*We have made a pact with Caesar, with power, the very pact that early Christians called idolatry. Because the newly converted ruler declared it to be our duty, we have squared it with our conscience to kill the Emperor’s enemies, and to do this with Jesus on our lips”*. Paul went on to witness that “*Jesus was not an idealistic dreamer. He was and remains the ultimate realist. The survival of our planet demands nothing less than the abolition of war. Albert Einstein, the great physicist and humanist, already knew that in the last century. He repeated it often with a clarity and credibility that few Christian pacifists have matched. The abolition of war is possible. It is as possible as was the abolition of slavery, the slavery that still haunts the history of this nation of Jamaica. Wilberforce and his evangelical friends who campaigned to end it, were thought to be unrealistic dreamers. Slavery, surely was part of our DNA, necessary to every society’s economic survival. The churches were up to their necks in maintaining slavery, the bishops of the Church of England unanimously upheld it. In the same way, many Christians are wedded to a society that cannot let go of the cult of the good soldier or even the holy warrior. Wilberforce and his determined friends triumphed against all odds. Slavery was made illegal. Its defenders withered away. That needs to become the fate of war. If the churches of the world fail to embark on such a campaign, we will have nothing of unique significance to say on the subject of world peace.... So, it is time for the still small voices of the historic peace churches, hitherto respected but ignored, to be taken seriously. That is why, as an Anglican priest, I have also chosen to be a Quaker, am member of the Religious society of Friends. Quaker history, often a story of suffering, witnesses to the biblical insight that love casts out fear. So dear friends of Jesus, can we agree in Kingston to work for the day when the majority of our fellow human beings begin to see collective violence, to see war, in the same way as they see individual murder?.. When –as in England a few weeks ago- a crown prince marries in a Christian cathedral, he is expected to wear full military regalia. Such symbols are powerful. That is the extent of our problem. Even when the Pope comes on a state visit, he is received, like every head of state, by soldiers carrying fixed bayonets that are designed to kill, rather than by children bearing flowers. His Holiness accepts the military rituals, as do practically all our churches. Do we even register the absurdity?....Having spent my life studying politics, I do not believe that there is any room for pacifist self-righteousness. I have not come to Kingston to demonise those who choose the military option. They are part of us, the many and the few. We must find ways of co-opting them into the peaceful struggle. The critics of principled non-violence are neither knaves nor fools. We must answer them wisely and patiently...In theory war is already outlawed. There are courts to try not only crimes committed in war, but the crime of war itself... when the still-young discipline of Peace Studies is given the same resources in the world’s universities that are given to Security Studies and the development of weapon systems, we will have made real progress... Peace will demand the dethroning of the military-industrial complex... Yes to life means no to war...The only lasting victory that we can win over our enemies, is to make them our friends. Kyrie eleison!”*

The 19th of May we met in our small Bible study groups for the first time. In my group participants came from the Philippines, Sierra Leone, Germany, the Netherlands and two day guests from Jamaica, two lovely Methodist sisters, describing themselves as “bible study group crashers”... We read Samuel 13: 1-22 about the rape of Tamar, as the theme of the Convocation for this day was *‘peace in the community’*. We exchanged views on the injustice wrought on Tamar and the silence of King David in the face of this....

In the plenary session in the big tent later that morning we heard testimonies by Muna Mushahwar, a Palestinian woman who told us of the suffering of her people. She is a medical doctor living and working in Jerusalem, involved in youth work and has been actively promoting the Palestinian Kairos document since 2009. She quoted an Israeli general who said ‘The Palestinian people must know they are a defeated people’....

She went on to ask us: “*Ask yourselves: do you see the daughter of a defeated people?*”

Next speaker was Asha Kowtal from India, a peace activist engaged in the struggle for emancipation of the Dalit women who suffer from the triple discrimination on account of caste, class and patriarchy. She said that she had come “*to expose the cruelties of the caste system and its systematic violation of human rights*”. She asked us “*how can we teach non-violence to the powerful, the oppressor?*” inviting us to join her struggle for dignity of all in Indian society.

Yet another impressive contribution was made by the son of Martin Luther King, Martin Luther King III. He recounted the dreams and deeds of his parents and the way in which these influenced him. In this context he revealed that his mother, Coretta King, went to a Quaker college whilst studying which laid the basis for her non-violent resistance to racism, poverty and militarism in her later life. Martin Luther King argued that we still have not learned the lesson that those are the three great evils we must resist as Christians! “*We made this world a neighbourhood, but we still did not succeed to make it a brotherhood*”.

After the plenary session I went to two different working groups. One was on a series of regional conferences bringing together representatives of the historic peace churches (Mennonites, Quakers and Brethren) in Africa, Asia and Latin America. These proved instrumental in bringing into focus that practising the peace testimony in the southern hemisphere is much more of an ‘uncomfortable truth’ and challenge than it is in the northern hemisphere! Moreover I attended a workshop by Peter Paul Ekker (IKV-Pax Christi NL) and Bina from India. Here the subject was a comparison between the enormous amounts available for military expenditure and –comparatively- the pittance available to achieve the UN ‘s Millenium goals. Some 80% of the weapon production and –trade world-wide is by the five nation states that are members of the Security council! More than a thousand companies in some 100 states are involved in the production of arms. Worldwide expenditure on military and arms is nearly one trillion dollars! If only 10% of these funds were available for the Millenium goals these would be within reach. Time to do something about it don’t you think?

In our Bible study group the 20th of May we studied Isaiah 11: 6-9, where the image of the wolf lying down with the lamb, the calf and the lion led by the little child is painted, the earth being full of the knowledge of the Lord. An image treasured amongst Quakers because it was painted under the title ‘the peaceable kingdom’ by our Friend Edward Hicks in the 17th century Pennsylvania.

At the plenary, the theme being *‘peace with the earth’* Tafue Lusama, chairperson of the Tuvalu Climate Action Network spoke on the way in which the climate crisis is literally swallowing up his little island of 26 square kilometres and 12000 inhabitants. Problems

caused include coastal erosion, flooding, prolonged periods of drought, salination of groundwater reserves, increased dependence upon rainwater for drinking water (whilst this is often lacking!), coral bleaching and loss of fish stocks, resulting in turn in food shortages, poor diets and health problems. He described what little his people can do locally about it all. The prospect may be that Tuvalu disappears in the rising waves of the ocean...that his people need to be displaced. In that case he hopes they would be resettled jointly somewhere, so as not to lose their common history, culture, language and identity. He challenged the nations in the northern hemisphere in saying that “*to exert power without justice is also violence!*”. Elias Cristosomo Abramides who was actively involved in various UN conferences on climate change supported Lusama’s view that this concern should be a priority for the churches. Adrian Shaw told us about the growing number of eco-congregations across all denominations in Scotland.

After this plenary I attended a working group on ‘solidarity economics’. Its focus resembled the conferences on a ‘Green and Fair Deal’ held by the University of Tilburg in the Netherlands during the past three years. Churches are challenged to contribute to the development of a ‘value driven economy’ requiring fundamental changes in the dominant economic model, so as to gear the economy towards a more cooperative process for the welfare of all.

In the evening we all went by bus downtown to ‘Emancipation Park’ – its name derived from a Bob Marley song- to attend a concert organised by our Jamaican hosts for the occasion. Fantastic choirs have been singing for us, gospel choirs, the choir of the Jamaican police constabulary force (!!), ballet dancers of the National Ballet performing, violin players, a dance group of deaf children dancing to the vibrations of the music (!!) and of course – towards the end- a reggae group made us sing Marley songs together! Wonderful!

On the morning of the 21st of May the Bible study group we read Matthew 20: 1-16 about the workers in the vineyard and how all of them received the same payment although they had worked different hours: ‘I will pay you whatever is right’....As this was linked to today’s theme we felt that this was somehow a ‘basic income’ *avant-la- lettre*. A minimum income for all to afford their daily bread....

After all, the plenary theme was ‘*peace in the marketplace*’. A panel discussion was organised during the plenary session. One of the members, Valentine Mokiwa, the president of the All Africa Conference of Churches, spoke out on the exploitation of rare minerals in Africa, often causing violent conflicts and war. The panel members being a mixture of theologians from different denominational backgrounds and having little economic grounding, this panel on the fundamental changes needed in our global was rather disappointing. It certainly did not meet the level of the workshop on this subject I attended the day before. During the afternoon I first went to a workshop by David Atwood (Quaker representative at the UN – Geneva) and Jonathan Frerichs (WCC-staff-Geneva) on ‘Just Peace and global Advocacy: Setting the Compass at Kingston’. With the help of a structured questionnaire we discussed in small groups what priorities the WCC should set the coming years given our consultations at Kingston. Some concerns scored high: combating climate change, fostering economic justice, total nuclear disarmament, curbing arms trade, banning war.

During the second part of the afternoon, with the assistance of Janna Postma (Dutch Mennonites, member of Church and Peace and IFOR) I presented my first workshop on ‘*Energy and raw materials: resource or source of conflict*’. It focused on the increasing importance attached to ‘energy security’ in the defence strategies of a growing number of nation states around the globe and the fierce competition for energy and raw materials

causing armed conflicts and wars, mainly in the southern hemisphere (e.g. rare metal minerals such as coltan as a trigger in the war in the Congo). In the paper the WCC was asked to urge the UN to convene a Resource Sharing Summit to democratically consider sharing rare and dwindling resources more equitably and transparently.

The paper was well received, particularly by participants from the southern hemisphere who during the lively discussion that followed- responded that this was the first time they had heard the root causes of war being addressed in more detail at Kingston!

Sunday the 22 nd of May some of us gathered before the ecumenical service to hold a small Quaker meeting for worship attended by some participants of other church traditions also.

At the ecumenical worship we were keenly aware that all over the world congregations had been invited to celebrate with us a 'World Sunday for Peace.' In St- Antoine in France the General Assembly of Church and Peace met as a kind of parallel convocation and we knew they would sing some of the same songs and use the same ministry of the word: Ephesians 2 : 14-22. The Council of Churches in the Netherlands translated some of the prayers and songs and invited member churches to pray with us at Kingston.....

We sang the song especially written by Grub Cooper, which includes the following lines:

Glory to God, peace on earth

We are standing on the front line as beacons of peace

Our mission will be long and resistance may be strong

But peace will conquer all; that's our cry and our song.....

And again beautiful local children choirs moved all of us deeply during the worship!

In the afternoon a Caribbean market had been organised where all sorts of handicrafts and local specialities were for sale....

As this was our only afternoon off, I spent some time with the delegation of the Council of Churches in the Netherlands at one of the Jamaican beaches, topped off by a wonderful fried fish dinner at one of the local restaurants, reggae music being played loud and proud.

The Bible study the 23 rd of May was on Ephesians 2: 11-22. How we are united in Christ and no longer strangers and aliens to one another, but citizens of the Kingdom of God.

This of course reflected the theme at the plenary session: '*peace amongst the peoples*'.

An impressive and moving testimony was given by Setsuko Thurlow, a Japanese survivor of the bombing of Hiroshima, now 79 years old, who told us about being the only girl of 13 years old to be saved from the ruins of her school, whilst afterwards her classmates were burnt alive! She then decided to dedicate her life as a peace activist to the campaign for nuclear disarmament, saying '*these weapons are indiscriminate, immoral and illegal*'

Lisa Schirch teaching peace building at the Eastern Mennonite University in the US told us: '*God's security strategy looks for the security of all people*', went on to say that peace building means '*growing peace from the ground up*' and that as far as 'early warning systems' to prevent armed conflicts and war the role of women is essential: '*if you do not ask the women, you do not know what happens!*'

We were reminded during this plenary that armed conflicts and war during the 20 th century have resulted in an estimated 160 million dead (!) , what can we do to prevent this from happening again during the 21 st century?

During the afternoon –again with the help of Janna- I was to give my second workshop on '*The responsibility to witness: the Historical Peace Churches Testimony towards peace building*'.¹ Unlike the northern hemisphere, where taking a Christian pacifist stand has become not only respectable, but comfortable, living the peace testimony in many countries in the southern hemisphere is more of an uncomfortable truth. Examples of faithful work on peace and reconciliation, particularly in Africa, were highlighted in the paper.

¹ Papers for both workshops available at request: k.nieuwerth@wxs.nl

As the rainy season was starting in Jamaica we had torrential rainfall!! Soaked we arrived at the designated location, only to find that another working group had been allocated the same room. We discovered only one person had come for our working group and the majority for the other and decided to skip it and attend another session at the big tent.

There we had a good dialogue led by Fernando Ens on the need to ground the concept of Just Peace theologically and in terms of what Diana Francis in her book *Rethinking war and peace* calls *positive peace*. So Janna and I concluded that it had to be this way: we had to be here, rather than in the workshop.

The last meeting of our small Bible study group! We read 2 kings 6: 8-23 about the King of Aram (in contemporary Syria) wishing to attack the King of Israel and the prophet Elisha asking god to strike his army with blindness, whereupon they are led into Samaria and treated to a great feast. Upon the return of the army to its commander King Aram the Arameans decided to no longer raid the land of Israel. We prayed that likewise one day the Israeli army would decide to no longer raid the land of the Palestinians.....

Then came the closing plenary already! The time had come for our last day together at Kingston! During the plenary we sang and prayed again.

The draft 'final message' was presented. Small 'buzz-groups' were formed to discuss the draft, after which a group of some 70 people lined up behind the microphones to comment. I had jumped up too, being the fourth in line....

Of course the plenary lasted longer than foreseen. The small committee that had worked on the draft had to consider all those amendments and the afternoon session started half an hour later. The amended version of the final message was then read. First of all this was followed by silence and then the assembly broke into loud applause. The chairperson during this session, a vice-president of the central committee of the WCC, the ecumenical patriarch Gennadios, who apparently had expected more comments, was somehow taken by surprise by this response. He concluded however that the final message obviously had been accepted by the plenary assembly!

When we compare the draft with the final message we will discover some essential differences. Like a sentence that was –rightfully- added reminding us about the colonial history of slavery in Jamaica while we met at a place which used to be a sugar plantation. Another comment made was that –although we had spoken about it during our meetings- no mention was made of the tensions between the Israeli and Palestinian peoples. A woman from Congo spoke movingly about the large number of dead due to the war and rape in her country and if nothing was aid about that she said: how can I go home with this final message? That also applied to other areas torn by deadly conflicts about which we had heard heart rending testimonies. So in the final message there is a clear paragraph about our solidarity with the peoples of Israel and Palestine both being damaged by the continuing conflict. The tensions in other areas where peoples are divided , such as Cyprus and Korea, are mentioned explicitly now, just like the peoples hoping for peace in Colombia, Iraq, Afghanistan and the Great Lakes Region in Africa.

Another comment that was honoured was that –although this had been put forward in contributions from India – racism and casteism and even discrimination were not mentioned at all in the draft., but they are in the final message.

There was some discussion as to whether war as a political instrument should be banned. In the final message it says that the churches are united in their aspiration that war is to be declared illegal, as is the case with slavery and biological and chemical weapons a=of mass destruction.

Another comment drew attention to the fact that nothing was said in the paragraph on 'peace in the community' about violence against women and children. In the paragraph about 'peace

with the earth' delegates sorely missed mention of the need to share natural resources more equitably. Another criticism was that –although this was also addressed at Kingston- no mention was made of nuclear energy. Now it says that the nuclear disaster at Fukushima yet again shows that we should not rely on nuclear energy.

In the paragraph about 'peace in the marketplace' the criticism of the dominant global economic model made during the Convocation were insufficiently incorporated by the draft according to the plenary assembly. This had also been amended in the final message. Explicit criticism of unfettered economic growth as a target for the neo-liberal economy is taken on board and the fact that enormous amounts are spent on military expenditure and arms trade, whilst little is available to achieve the Millennium Goals, as well as the need to reorient the economic system towards an ecologically and socially responsible world economy is now explicitly mentioned. The final message even states that 'we urge the governments of this world to ..redirect their financial resources to programmes that foster life rather than death'. In the draft text there was a sentence that said 'in the light of the responsibility to protect as part of the concept of Just Peace, we continue to struggle with how innocent people can be protected from war and violence' . this one had made me jump up and move over to the microphone! I voiced out to be very unhappy about the concept of *R2P being declared part of the concept of Just Peace* . I asked whether European armies went into Libya to protect civilians or their own 'energy security', as Libya illustrates how the concept of R2P can be abused! This resulted in an important change in the final message which now reads that 'we continue to struggle with how innocent people can be protected from injustice, war and violence. In this light, we struggle with the concept of the 'responsibility to protect' and its possible misuse.'

Contrary to the draft the final message is also explicitly stating that the member churches of the WCC are advocating total nuclear disarmament and the control of the proliferation of 'small arms'. It also urges churches to support and protect the right of conscientious objection and to assure asylum for those who oppose and resist militarism and armed conflicts. Moreover it advocates that peace education should move to the centre of every curriculum in schools, seminaries and universities.

Next to this brief final message there is of course the '*Ecumenical Call to Just Peace*' based on an earlier draft which was reworked on the basis of the many responses of member churches throughout the world as well as a Companion Document which contains much of the theological underpinning of the Call to Just Peace. Moreover there are the reports on the many workshops held at Kingston and their recommendations. The WCC will be able to deduct priorities from these for its work programme in the coming period . These will be presented to the General Assembly of the WCC to be held in Korea in 2013. The final message of Kingston therefore asks the WCC to prioritize Just Peace in all its dimensions in its work programme from now on! The final message even says: '*History, especially in the witness of the historic peace churches, reminds us of the fact that violence is contrary to the will of God and can never resolve conflicts. It is for this reason that we are moving beyond the doctrine of just war to a commitment to just peace.*' Obviously this statement on the witness of the historic peace churches has not been formulated by those members of this tradition present at the Convocation, but by delegates from other traditions within the wider Christian church.

Menonites, Quakers and Brethren present at Kingston have gathered several times during the Convocation to exchange experiences and views as to how it went.

I had been delegated to attend this meeting first of all by the European ecumenical peace movement Church and Peace, founded more than 60 years ago by the historical peace

churches. At a later stage Hans Ulli Gerber, the president of the International Fellowship of Reconciliation, yet another –worldwide- peace movement, asked me to also represent IFOR. Last, but not least I was asked to serve as delegation leader of the delegation of the Council of Churches in the Netherlands, comprising the Archbishop of the Old Catholic church, the president of the Synod of the Protestant Church, a delegate of the Mennonite church, a delegate of the Interchurch Peace Council and Pax Christi and of several diaconal bodies in the Netherlands. And of course (European) Quakers also felt that I was their representative!

The question is: what have we achieved?

- From the beginning we hoped to convince the participants that the Convocation was not to be regarded as the close of the Decade to overcome Violence –as it was presented on forehand- but rather as a new beginning: a chance to harvest seeds for a new planting season with which the WCC could launch a new campaign to banish war and the use of deadly violence as a political instrument to settle conflicts.
- To develop an Ecumenical Call to Just Peace that actually urges us to follow Jesus’ non-violent way and will be an inspiring document for the above mentioned campaign.
- To commit the WCC to an active policy directed at banning weapons of mass destruction and other categories of weapon systems as well as a campaign against arms production and arms trade, in close cooperation with other world religions.
- To stimulate churches to contribute actively to non violent conflict resolution (also financially!) and to commit themselves to peace and reconciliation locally and elsewhere in our world.
- To inspire the members of our churches to adopt a lifestyle that enables all citizens of this world to live just, sustainable and peaceful lives.
- To ask the worldwide church to serve as an ‘early warning system’ where and when conflicting interests threaten to erupt into armed conflicts in order for early non-violent intervention by local and international authorities, as well as the churches themselves, to be enabled. The WCC is well-placed to play an important facilitating role in developing such a network.

Looking back over the Convocation, its plenary sessions, its workshops, its worship services, its Bible studies, the documents produced, I feel I must conclude that most of these concerns and proposals have been actively raised and put on the agenda of the World Council of Churches!

But the IEPC at Kingston also raises a serious question with the Historic Peace Churches as a living tradition. From the opening session (Paul Oestreicher) to the final message we are referred to as an example.

One might of course say that since the 1953 when the Historic Peace Churches (and IFOR) presented their ‘*Peace is the Will of God: A Testimony to the World Council of Churches*’, it has taken the mainstream churches time to ‘move beyond the doctrine of Just War to the commitment to Just Peace’...On the other hand: let us rejoice this is so!

It means though that –in the midst of our ecumenical family- members of the three so-called peace churches and the peace movements founded by them, Church and Peace and IFOR, need to patiently persist in the responsibility to witness. To witness to our heritage: the deeply held conviction that to follow the non-violent way is an integral part of being a disciple of Jesus. In this respect it is of course a pity that only a small number of Mennonite, Quaker and Brethren groups throughout the world are full-fledged members of the World Council of

Churches at the moment. *Perhaps this is something that needs serious reconsideration in the light of this historic meeting at Kingston, Jamaica?*

Finally at the closing session at Kingston, the ‘founder’ of the Decade to Overcome Violence, our Mennonite Friend Fernando Ens spoke once more:

‘Look around you, what do you see? What a privilege to participate in this fellowship – so glory be to God and peace on earth! We have come a long way in our journey. Life changing experiences for individuals as well as churches. Justice and peace are the real heartbeat of the ecumenical community! But...we are not satisfied. We are only beginning to grasp this. It is not to speak to the marginalized, but to stand with the marginalized. For this to happen we are only starting to create the necessary safe places....We are only starting to focus on prevention, non-violent intervention. We must continue to commit ourselves today to explore the theological and ethical foundations of Just Peace. And we need to take bold steps to practise it. In doing so we shall hold one another accountable. The church either accepts the call to Just Peace or it is not the church at all!!’

I cannot but agree wholeheartedly!

What an inspiring meeting at Kingston!

Or as it was expressed in one of the many beautiful worship services:

‘And it came to pass that in the year of our Lord, 2011, the global church gathered at Kingston, Jamaica, to celebrate the triumph of peace over violence and righteousness over injustice’

Amen, may it be so!

Kees Nieuwerth

Clerk of Netherlands Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)

Delegate at the IEPC for the European Ecumenical Peace Movement Church and Peace.