

283 | 2020 European Peace Colloquy
Project Zion Podcast

Josh Mangelson 0:17

Welcome to the Project Zion podcast. This podcast explores the unique spiritual and theological gifts Community of Christ offers for today's world.

Robin Linkhart 0:33

Hello, welcome to project Zion podcast. This is your host Robin Linkart and today we are focusing on a topic that connects deeply with the heart of Community of Christ as a movement and as a people of faith. Peace. I am delighted to welcome three guests today. Andrew Bolton who coordinated the work of Community of Christ in 10 countries in Asia. Andrew is an advocate for peace and I prolific writer. Elray Henriksen, a Norwegian holds graduate degrees in peace building and communications, and Joey Williams. Joey serves as the mission center president for Western Europe. Andrew, Elray and Joey Welcome to project Zion podcast.

Andrew Bolton 1:28

Thank you for inviting us.

Elray Henriksen 1:31

Thank you, Robin. Thank you for having us.

Joey Williams 1:33

It's great to be here.

Robin Linkhart 1:34

We are happy to have you. We are here today to talk about the 2020 European Peace Colloquy Webinar Series: Peaceful Humanity A New Creation, which launches July eighth and runs through October 2020. But first, let's get to know our guests just felt little bit better. Andrew, we'll start with you tell us more about you.

Andrew Bolton 2:07

I was born and grew up in the north of England. My dad was a British soldier in World War II. And his experiences through a dark shadow over my early years of my brothers to my three brothers, so the four us World War II didn't actually end till 20 years after the war. And when he began to get help from a medical doctor, who who was a veteran also and understood. So then, the romantic view of war was punctured for me. I grew up Roman Catholic, but was looking for something better in that community of Christ. In of all places, Germany, working in Germany encountering loving church members may be both the European and I found a way through baptism to express my longing for peace.

Robin Linkhart 3:04

Thanks, Andrew. Elray?

Elray Henriksen 3:07

So yes. So as you said, I'm a Norwegian. I'm currently a full time volunteer for Community of Christ in Belgium. So I live in Brussels with my husband, Anton and my dog Maya. And my role in Community of Christ is to serve as national ministry coordinator for Belgium. And as the team lead for the European peace and justice team, in Community of Christ. So peace projects, which is Ministry of Community of Christ Europe, and headed by this team is in charge of organizing the European peace colloquium, which will be online this year, and that we will be talking more about.

Robin Linkhart 3:48

Thanks, Elray. Joey?

Joey Williams 3:51

Well, it's a pleasure to be here. I am the person who organizes activities for Community of Christ all throughout Europe. So we have many different countries that represent part of who we are. And one of my responsibilities is to coordinate the different types of ways that we get involved in mission. And so I'm very excited that we have a peace team that is not only the Western Europe mission center, but also has representation from the British Isles mission center. So this is a team that goes over to different jurisdictions as we work together to talk about the context of what is going on in Europe and how we might best respond to the different needs for justice and for peace.

Robin Linkhart 4:38

Thanks, Joey. I think it's interesting to note to our listeners that our three guests today are joining us from three different national locations. So we really have an international flavor on our interview today. Okay, let's just kind of jump into the deep end. I want to give a little bit of background on this whole concept on Peace Colloquy. Over the last several decades Community of Christ has established a denominational tradition of holding annual peace colloquia, often held in conjunction with the Community of Christ International Peace Award. In more recent years that focus has been dovetailed to other events such as our international World Conference. And on occasion, we have not held a Peace Colloquy. The first peace colloquy began December it's 319 93 in the newly completed Community of Christ Temple in Independence, Missouri, a temple that is dedicated to the pursuit of peace, reconciliation, and healing of the Spirit. It was also the first day that the daily prayer for peace was held in the town.

In 1998, Andrew Bolton was appointed to serve full time as Community of Christ peace and justice minister. And a major focus of that role was providing leadership for everything connected with the annual peace colloquy held in the independence tiempo. To date there have been a total of 26 recipients of the Community of Christ International Peace Award. That number accounts for three years when more than one individual received the award. So here we are, now we are having a European Peace Colloquy shared online, another first titled peaceful humanity, a new creation. What brought you to creating this event? What is it going to look like? And who wants to start

Elray Henriksen 7:01

I'd be happy to start here, Robin. So, giving a bit of a historical background for me and why I get engaged in this is to explain first that when I became a new member in the Oslo congregation in Norway, I was I was baptized in 2011. And I was I was given a stipend to travel to my first international peace colloquium in Independence, Missouri that same year from my congregation. And this was just such an amazing and foundational experience for me and, and how I, in terms of also how I came to engage, engage with Community of Christ of the following years. I met a few people at this colloquy including Joey Williams for the first time and made really good friends there. I've always wanted to go back to participate in one of these colloquy but haven't had the chance. Since then, they are normally over a weekend so it kind of is a bit extravagant to travel all the way from Europe to be in Independence for weekend. But the energy and the learning that that used to take place at these events was electrifying. So one of the reasons we we organized the first peace colloquy, the British Isles mission center in 2018, was to recreate the success of these peace colloquium that had been held and this tradition that hadn't been held in Independence, Missouri for so long. And, and, and this year, the European peace colloquy is a follow up of the British Isles mission center, peace colloquy at the time. So we believe that these events and ministries can be recreated in different geographical areas of the church. And we're so excited for the opportunity to be hosting this coming European peace colloquium online over the coming months.

Unknown Speaker 8:58

So when I got the job,

Andrew Bolton 9:00

coordinating peace and justice ministries and doing Pisco Equus? I had to look up the word colloquy to find out what it meant. Because it's not obvious as if you have a limited education. So colloquy means conversation. So peace colloquy means peace conversations about important justice issues. So, and I helped organize 11 of these things in the peace Temple Independence, the way European peace colloquy Europe has been a peace and justice disaster. Look at European history, colonization, two world wars in the 20th century, Holocaust nuclear weapons threatening us. We British invented the Industrial Revolution and climate changes and then fourth unfortunate consequence, but there's also good news in Europe, out of Europe, came the anabaptist choosing the Mennonites, Quakers, the Church of the Brethren. So the three major piece churches all were both birthed in Europe. In Europe, we have the first welfare states, just imagine free meds just because you need it just because you're human. And then the Council of Europe and its Convention of Human Rights for every European citizen, happened beginning 1949 as a consequence of the why response to the war, to prevent the trust is happening in the future. And the European Union has been a huge and significant and successful peace project. But now there are threats from the far right. Brexit. There's climate change threatening as all those anti semitism and Islamophobia. Britain's renewing its nuclear weapons at a huge cost. And Europeans have never ever really challenged their racism. So that's why there's an urgency for a peace colloquy.

Joey Williams 11:03

I think Andrew hits it on the head when he points out some of the things that are going on that really asked the question, why a peace colloquy, and why right now? And I think the theme really points to a place that we are in history where this theme may have more impact than it could have ever had maybe in the past, in my generation, at least, Peaceful Humanity: a New Creation, is the theme that we're going to be treating at this peace colloquy, and there may never have been a better time for such a colloquy as right now, there are so many conversations in the world that are not only beginning, but that people are asking for more than just a discussion. People are looking for change. People are standing up asking their governments, their community leaders, their community services, people that serve in their community, other organizations and even churches are being asked to take a second look at their welcome at their hospitality. What does that truly mean? And we have an opportunity right now to question the quality of our hospitality and welcome in ways that we never have before. This in turn, I think, questions the quality of just about everything we do. It has us take a crucial lens, and a different way of looking at what we've been doing before and ask them important questions about not only what we're doing, but how we're doing it. It's a look at hospitality that's more than simply just asking people, "Can you bring an extra dish or a different type of dish to the potluck this Sunday?" but it's actually exactly that. It's have we considered all of the wonderful flavors that represent the different groups and cultures variety of ways of looking at the world and the diverse needs of our communities so that we can create and prepare an appropriate smorgasbord for peace. And have we found appropriate and good ways to invite others to that banquet? So I think one of the most exciting things for me of why this piece colloquy and why now is that we've created a holistic approach to our welcome when it comes to peace, as we look at seven different dimensions of peace. And so it's appropriate that our peace colloquia will focus on these seven different dimensions of peace and try to have a more holistic approach to how we respond to the needs for justice and peace in the world. The the theme actually comes out of Steve Veazey's closing sermon at the 2019 World Conference. His sermon was titled Discover Your Future. And when it got to the second half of that sermon, I felt chills running up and down, probably because Western Europe had presented a resolution on non violence and I felt like we were being responded to from cbz as he began to speak, he used Ephesians chapter two, verse 15, and talked about Jesus saying his purpose was to create in himself one new humanity, thus making peace. And so this idea of a new humanity already comes out here, and cbz called Jesus, the forerunner of this new humanity. So as we look at the things happening in our world right now, I see people doing probably one of two things more or less, they're either retreating and hiding in their silence, worried that the world is falling apart, but others are actively engaging in new possibilities of the way the world could be new ways of being new ways of doing. And I think Community of Christ is called to be engaged with Christ out in the forefront, these forerunners of Christ's new peaceful humanity, helping to usher in a new era, a new time, a new way of being.

Robin Linkhart 15:24

Thanks all of you. I just have so many things running through my head at one time in response to the powerful things you've shared with us. I couldn't help but notice as Joey was talking about the second half of President v Z's closing sermon at World Conference 29, then his

reference to Ephesians 2:15. And using the word foreigner, all three of you currently hold the Office of 70 and then Community of Christ 70 are considered for runners of Christ's peace. So there is a high degree of tingle factor associated with that connection as I was listening to you, Andrew gave a great overview of issues you're facing us, Europe and I have a couple questions I'd like you to delve into at this point. What are the peace and justice issues in Europe you're hoping to address? And how does it connect with life and faith journey in your part of the world?

Elray Henriksen 16:31

So, I mean, let's suppose say that there's a great list of speakers that are lined up for this coming peace colloquy. These are people with different backgrounds who have accepted the invitation to share their knowledge and their passion with us. So as a team we met in 2019 to reflect on the socio political situation and on the in Europe and the issues that Andrew just raised. And and how the situation is impacting our church groups across the European continent. So Joey mentioned also this holistic model of peacemaking, the seven dimensions of Christ's peace. And this model borrows from the Just Peace approach of the World Council of Churches. Actually, each dimension reflects on one of the Beatitudes, and is designed to help individuals and teams to take the first step towards peace and justice action. We decided then to set up the European peace colloquy around each of these dimensions, and find an angle for the presentation and a speaker that would help illustrate each of those dimensions. So we'll go on we'll go through the program now and and provide you with kind of an overview. And Andrew you you You're the first one, I think to talk.

Andrew Bolton 17:53

So I'm going to speak first of all about personal piece, personal pieces really important for all of us. This includes getting right with God, getting right with our neighbors, our spouses, sorting out conflicts in our families and other important people in our lives. And then there's a hole, so deep in our soul that only an infinite God can fill. A loving, only infinite loving spirit can fill and give that peace. Paul talks about a peace that passes understanding. So that's background for this dimension. What we're going to look at is mental health. And we have two young adults from Wales. Sisters, in fact, Sara and Hannah, and both with PhDs in psychology and neuroscience, and they're going to lead our discussion on mental health. They will help us make a stop in this discussion.

Joey Williams 18:49

Yeah, the second dimension is learning about peace. And this comes from that part of the Beatitudes that says, Blessed are those who are gentle. And this idea of when we learn when we get together and we focus on how we can actually be agents of peace, just imagine how that can spread out and transform those who are around us. And so, in this aspect, we've invited a Quaker to come and talk to us. Her name is Isabel Cartwright, she'll probably ask us to call her Izzy. And she is the peace education program manager for the Quakers in Britain. I had a great opportunity to go to the Quakers national conference last year in London, and it was just an amazing experience to be with this, this really cool faith tradition and watch how they get together. And they deliberate and not only worship but also come to decision making

together as a peaceful nonviolent movement. And that was just quite an experience for me. So I'm excited for Izzy to come and to talk to us about the work that she's been doing over the she spent 10 years in East London, working with persons at risk, and especially youth, and she just has a lot of specialty and working in secondary schools and on projects that help people that are being excluded. The focus that she's going to have in this peace colloquy will be on different arms companies, companies that are increasingly running programs in schools. And then there's all these military visits that go with that. So basically, what's happening is recruitment. People are, young people are being recruited to be agents of violence in many ways, and through different arms companies. And so she's going to come and talk not only about that, and some of the raising some awareness of what's going on, but she's going to focus on what it means to help youth develop critical thinking skills. And I know in Community of Christ youth is a focus. such an important part of the ministries that we do to create safe spaces where young people can explore their lives where they can share together where they can learn, grow and develop. And I think critical thinking skills is one of the best things that we provide in the different activities that we offer in Community of Christ. So I'm excited for her to come and give us maybe even some more pointers on what it means to help our young people develop their own moral compass through life and to be prepared for what values are important and have priority to them as they look towards peace in their world.

Elray Henriksen 21:45

And then, after we learned about personal peace and peacemaking, we were thinking how what's the next step when you when you've, you know, gain personal peace and, and actually thought about, okay, how do I do things? The next step is really building a team, getting people together on an issue and working together. So we've asked Zac Harmon MacLaughlin, from the director of the Community of Christ seminary to help us explore the topic of working ecumenical at an interface in terms of partnerships and, and advocacy. How do you set up an action team? How do you work in teams? What are the issues that you identify that you want to work on together? And how will you work together on these issues? You can set yourselves objectives as a team, but are those objectives realistic? Can they be achieved? And who should you be working with so many questions that kind of arise from this third dimension of Christ's Peace, which is really, in my mind, it's kind of like Jesus assembling a group of people and saying, hey, let's, let's make a change. So so I'm excited about having Zac, one of our own voices in the church actually speak and address this issue. And help us also perhaps discern what are the challenges and the opportunities that arise from working with other people? What are the possibilities that might have gone unexplored so far? He is the co chair of the ecumenism and interfaith team of the church as well. So he's very well placed to help us discern and think about these things together.

Andrew Bolton 23:45

So peace in the neighborhood, and they described a little bit neighborhood here in Leicester, in fact, where Joey has also lived. On one side we have Sikh neighbors. On the other side, we have Hindu neighbors. There are Jews in the city, lots of Muslims, and there are rich and poor in this city, black and brown and white, LGBT+ and straight, male and female, and people who don't quite fit. Some of us were born here, some of us moved here. All of us, though, are made in the

image of God, all of us have great worth in the sight of God. So how do we address European dark legacies like racism, the Holocaust colonization? How do we act to prevent dehumanization of ourselves and others? can we work together for instance, to make sure the heart of Europe is not the finances, not the business, not other things. The heart of Europe should be Auschwitz: Never Again, to create a Europe that is good for every child in Europe, black, brown or white immigrants or native born,

Joey Williams 25:02

The next topic that will be discussed will be peace for the earth. And it's really important to distinguish because Elray is going to talk next on peace on the earth. So we've made a distinction of peace for the earth, and peace on the earth. And when we talk about peace for the earth, this is that Enduring Principle that we have in Community of Christ of Sacredness of Creation. So we're looking at what is going on on the earth that could potentially be causing issues for peace and justice in the world. I have this one of my favorite stories about vegetarianism is in a trip that I took to Barcelona and I went into a home and I had a vegetarian who was with me. And so I said, You know, I just want to make it clear up front. Thank you for having us for dinner. But she's vegetarian, the girl that's with me and they're like, Oh, yeah, no problem, no problem at all. And they came out with a pizza and as we started to eat the pizza, we're like, well what's on this? She's like ham. And we're like, well, that's not exactly the type of vegetarian that she is. She doesn't eat meat. And they're like, Oh, I'm so sorry, no problem. They go back into the kitchen, and they start to create another pizza. 10 minutes later, they come out and we start to eat the next pizza. And we're like, well, what's on this pizza? Well, tuna, you said she was vegetarian. And so that's just one of my favorite stories of my experience going around. People want to be hospitable, I think in the things that are going on with people's choices of what they eat, whether being vegan or vegetarian. But it's it's important to know that there's so much learning that we still have to do about the different ways that people choose to eat and also the reasons why they choose to eat that way. One of the first things that I learned from Andrew Bolton who, who let me rent his house in Leicester For many years and when I first got there, one of the things that Andrew told me was in this diverse community, do you realize that having vegetarianism at your table or veganism at your table is a way to include all of these diverse cultures and religions? It is the meal that we can all sit down and share and be respectful of Hinduism and be respectful of different other religions and the ways that they consider the foods that they eat. So that really struck me. And Andrew can attest that, for the three years that I was living in Leicester, I had a vegetarian household. I didn't bring meat into my home because I thought that was such an important part of hospitality and also it was a good educational part for myself. We're excited to have a speaker who is well educated well experienced on this and he's in his early 20s. His name's Ryan Commons. And he has been studying and has finished a degree in theology at Cambridge. Recently, he is probably one of the most hospitable people living on a plant based diet that I've ever encountered. He's so grateful for hospitality that people show towards him. But he also finds very gracious ways of preserving someone's dignity when they get it wrong, which I have, I've tried to feed him things, you know, I'm like, well just have this cheese. He's like, No, I don't have that type of cheese because I'm big. But he's always trying to find appropriate and great ways to educate people on issues that are important to him.

It's important for Ryan to be an activist for animal rights. And so he is going to share not only some of his experiences in protests that he's been a part of, and ways that he has helped raise awareness of the issues surrounding animal protection, but he'll also take it deeper to help us to understand all of the line of consequences that can happen in the choices that we make with the foods that we decide to put into our bodies. So he's not just going to talk about why you should be a vegan, but he's going to talk about what are some of the consequences when we choose to not only ingest meat or different types of products, but what consequences can that have on our environment, on property, on land on people who are living in poor regions of the world because of sums, something some people's need to over consume. So he's going to bring a much larger and diverse way of discussing this issue. He's such an eloquent speaker. He's a great moderator. He's been the moderator for our interfaith dialogues in Lester for several years. He's a quick thinker and doesn't get upset or flustered easily, at least he doesn't show it if he does. And I think it's just amazing how this 20 something young man is so cool on his feet, and able to help us think through ways that we might have a less violent future for our world.

Andrew Bolton 30:16

And I want to add that he's going to be joined by Georgia, his wife, okay. And in Georgia is as passionate and as eloquent as Ryan about all of this.

Elray Henriksen 30:28

So, the next, the next dimension is peace on earth, and peace on the earth and this dimension. I think, a nice segue between what Joey just talked about and and Leo Tolstoy's political thought, is that Leo Tolstoy, if I am correct, I might be wrong on this, but I think it's he's the one who said that, as long as there are slaughterhouses. There will be battlefields and Leo Tolstoy has a political thought of non violence. That is, or, and Christian anarchism that is kind of that was very revolutionary at the time. And that really it and that really inspired Mahatma Gandhi among others. So we have Alexandre Christoyannopoulous, who's a senior lecturer in Politics and International Relations at Loughborough University and he's the author of two different books on Christian anarchism and also political thought. So, he will be coming and talking about religious anarchism and Leo Tolstoy. So my, my introduction to Leo Tolstoy was when I was just coming out of the military service in Norway. So that's approximately 20 years ago, and I realized that my Father had a few small books on Leo Tolstoy, his political thinking. And one of them was the kingdom of God is within you, and other political essays or other essays. And it was, it really was a transformative journey to kind of read that book for me in terms of trying to understand from a different point of view, so a different perspective, it was completely different perspective than what I had previously heard and learned, growing up Mormon. So this webinar will summarize the main themes and do Tolstoy's political thought, and with a view to reflect on these main ideas as a remedy for nationalism. So the five main themes that we hope to, we hope that Alexandre will help us guide us through will be on pacifism, anarchism and de clericalism asceticism and nonviolent activism So really excited about this one.

Andrew Bolton 33:04

And Alexandre is so bouncy, so amazing. So you'll really enjoy listening to him. So peace in the marketplace is the next day mentioned economic peace is really important. There are over 2000 verses in the Bible about poverty. Jesus has more to say about economic justice in the New Testament than he does about faith. Charity is important. But economic justice is even more important. And that's what Exodus is all about. Freeing people from slavery from poverty. Moses was called by God to be God's organizer of the people of Israel. And go and speak to Pharaoh with a simple message. Let my people go. Signs about economic justice. It's one of the best things that happened in the early restoration, where we were a bad time communitarian Christian socialist model. The next too, if you have any doubts read for me at the beginning. So Keith had done is the keynote speaker is also receiving the Community of Christ European Peace Award. And we're presenting this award the first time. And it's for his work as a community organizer in Leicester, organizing people to identify that justice issues, and then speak truth to power, who was amazing to work with, is so deeply Christian. And he's a very good friend of committed Christ. And he'll have us on the edge of our seats when he gives us keynote.

Joey Williams 34:37

Yeah, everything that Andrew says about him is correct. And what I appreciate about Keith is his commitment to grassroots efforts to actually sitting at people's tables sitting around tables with people in the community, asking what are their needs, what are the questions of their community, and then helping to organize people come together so he will be very exciting to listen to I think the key question for us in a peace colloquy is what would you do for peace? And this is a slogan that we adopted. Before the 2016 World Conference, we created a world website, peace projects club that starts with just that question, what would you do for peace? And that's the question that we try to hope to instill in people's minds. What will you be involved in? What will you be a part of, and it's really important for us in a peace colloquy that we give people steps from point zero or little background in peace that they can take for peace. And this isn't dumbing down the peace process. It's the hard work of making theory, concrete, tangible, real in people's lives. And so we have to have a lot of consideration and reflection in that. And then we have to find these small practical ways to begin to put flesh on our projects that will lead to justice and peace. But even if you have a degree in peace studies, the question will be what are you doing for peace? How will you in real tangible ways be getting involved? What teams will you be a part of to make progress for peace?

Robin Linkhart 36:18

Wow. So this is an amazing event. It begins July 8, it's running through October of 2020. It has a completely different delivery spanning months in contrast to our most common past practice of one weekend. It's multi dimensional, it brings with it education, building awareness of issues just jam packed with content. But then it goes into opportunities where the participant is being taught about teams and partnering. We're being equipped with tools to us wherever we are on our journey of peacemaking, and wherever we're located on the planet Earth, and then this amazing call to action. So how can people participate in this event? Is there a fee? How do we get more information about it?

Andrew Bolton 37:21

So it's first of all, an online event with the help of zoo, which we're so grateful for these days. So if you've ever wanted to come to Europe, this is your big chance. And the good news is you don't need a passport, or visa or risky COVID dangerous, expensive flight to join us. And registration is free. There's not a better deal going on the planet as this series of webinars. And more information about the event is to be found on Facebook and Twitter. And I think thing is European peace. colicky and peace projects are simply They email me at abolton, and then the digit 2 @live.com. Again, abolton2@live.com, and I'll raise anything you want to add about contacting us for the peace colloquy.

Elray Henriksen 38:20

I think I think you covered the essential here. However, there was one thing that I don't think we mentioned in our in the seven dimensions. When we describe the seven dimension, this is actually the first foundational webinar that's going to happen on the eighth of July. And Andrew, would you be able to say a bit more about Richard Wrangham and and what he will contribute with?

Andrew Bolton 38:47

So yes, so Richard Wrangham is a primatologist, somebody who studies chimpanzees, and apes and so on. And he's British but is based in Harvard is Professor biological anthropology at Harvard. He worked with Jane Goodall. That's how he got started. And the Community of Christ gave Jane Goodall, the Peace Award in 1999. So he knows her well. And he's written a book called The goodness paradox. Humans are the most gentle of species. You can put three or 400 humans on the plane sober, and there's not going to be a fight. You couldn't do that with chimpanzees. So there's this gentle side of humans. But then we also have this conspiracy risk, conspiracy faculty to do terrible things like murder, war genocide. So he's going to be looking at the biological evolution of both goodness and and terrible violence. And he's a very engaging speaker. So, the question is, is a new peaceful humanity possible given our biological makeup? He'll answer that question.

Robin Linkhart 40:14

This is absolutely captivating as we talk about this 2020 European Peace Colloquy. It's free, it's online, which provides all kinds of possibilities and potential to connect with no travel costs. And what an amazing speaker to start the author of the Goodness Paradox and to kind of ground us with the foundation of understanding humanity from a biological anthropological perspective, and introduce us to the nature of the human species that has this amazing capacity for gentleness and also horrific violence. I can't wait for that one for sure. So listeners, we will put all the links in our show notes to today's interview. So you can easily click on that link and go right where you need to go to register this event. My understanding is that you can jump on at any point obviously, this is layered and all the different webinars are connected with one another and it makes an amazing hole. But feel free to jump on when you can. So, panel, what are your hopes for this peace colloquy?

Elray Henriksen 41:41

I think our ambition has been to accompany first of all Community of Christ members and friends in Europe, on our journey towards World Conference 2022 especially in the light of the resolution on non violence 1319 that was passed at the last conference. And I think our hope is The different topics will provide a wealth of different angles and approaches to the topic of non violence and peace in so much that our members and friends will continue to reflect on what they can do for peace. I've learned over the years that asking questions and living into the answers of those questions is a way like of shaking my world gently. We are in need of awakening as Joey spoke about, and nothing better than a gentle nudge at our side bed while we're asleep, to bring about necessary change within the church and in the world and to become fully awake. This peace colloquium wants to encourage this questioning, inform the conversations and ultimately lead to positive and decisive change. So that's what I think.

Joey Williams 42:57

Yeah, I agree and Elray mentioned The resolution that was passed at the 2019 World Conference. And we were so excited as British Isles mission center and Western Europe mission center to present the original proposals for that, that the became a substitute. And we were excited about that substitute as well because it allowed the world church to then move forward to begin to look at ways to open up that discussion for the entire church. And they've been doing that by putting it in our family camps and family reunions, material that has been prepared for those discussions, to put it into our youth education programs and curriculum to talk about non violence and what that might mean. There's articles that are being prepared for the Herald. There is consideration of non violence amongst the Peace and Justice team of the church and the Human Rights team. And it's been a topic that's been discussed among the Council of 12, as well as the presidents of 70 and others. Different quorums within the church. So it's really exciting to see how many outlets that this topic of non violence is beginning to become a focus of discussions in. And so we're proud to be a part of that. But it also means that as part of Western Europe and British Isles, we have to take responsibility for even bringing this up as a theme for the church, and then continue to do our part. And so we want to make sure that this resolution gets lived out to start thinking about peace, which we do in these colloquys, but also learning ways to practice justice and peace in our local context. We literally need to touch the lives of those that we are working with in Europe. And so for me, a hope is that this piece colloquy, touches the things that we're trying to do. One of those things is the Co Citizen Project that has started in Brussels and among the work that we're doing all throughout Belgium. It's this idea of not calling immigrants, immigrants and refugees refugees, although we recognize where they are coming from, but call them co citizens, give them an equal platform and begin to give them a voice in European context and society. So what can we learn at peace colloquies like this, that will help us stand shoulder to shoulder and give voice to the neighbors that we're working with, as we stand with them and their struggles, and try to find some real tangible ways to allow them to have a place in the context of Europe as well as in the world. So my hope is that we continue to find pathways where our activity can have the most influential and positive impact on society, as well as all of creation, wherever we live, whatever our local contexts may be, but also that we see what we could do together on a European level when we come together to be for runners of this new piece. Humanity as we collaborate together throughout Europe

Andrew Bolton 46:04

In the past to miss the terrible violence of Europe, there have been those that heard the voice calling from the peaceful one. And we're hoping that this online peace colloquy to hear again, the call of the peaceful one. Now, the issues in Europe are issues elsewhere as well. And we already have an international audience gathering from Australia, Canada, United States, and every country in the United Kingdom, as well as in Europe. And we're starting this Wednesday, the eighth of July at 1pm. Zion time. That's Independence time. 7pm. UK time. And we're starting with Richard Wrangham on the goodness paradox on human evolution. What's our evolutionary story that leads to a capacity both for kindness and violence. We've already got 150 people registered, but we have room for more. So we do hope that you will join us. And again, my email is and it's probably going to be in the program notes as well is abolton2@live.com. Abolton digit 2 @ live.com. o email me and I'll get back to you straight away

Joey Williams 47:31

This call to hear the voice of the peaceful when is for everyone. And so I know that you can listen to a podcast like this and be like, Oh my gosh, this is just way beyond what I understand about peace. I gave a sermon to a group of youth 10 years ago in 2010. And the theme of that youth rally that was a four day rally that we were having was 2020 vision. The idea was Where might you be on your journey of peace in 10 years and 2020. And I can tell you, I would never have expected 10 years ago, that 10 years later I would be sitting here talking about the second piece colloquia in Europe that we are trying to pull off. And being a part of a peace team and peace initiatives and peace activities. It's just gone beyond what I would have ever dreamed that God had in store for my own life. And so your peace project, your peace initiatives can start here. So if there's been any interest in the topics that you've heard, you are welcome. We are linking hands with others who are also working for peace and justice on local levels, the individuals out there and also organizations all across Europe and beyond.

Andrew Bolton 48:51

So do join us!

Robin Linkhart 48:53

This has been such a great interview and we have learned so much. I want to pause here and ask you, is there anything else you would like to share with our listeners that I haven't asked you about today?

Joey Williams 49:09

The great thing is you don't need a passport or a visa. And you can come to this peace colloquy with a very low carbon footprint. It will be in English, but you can feel welcome to participate and be a part of that. One of the things I'm excited about is we wouldn't have gotten very many, many of the people we're working with in CO citizens to be able to get a visa to get to Great Britain for this piece colloquy, but now there's a potential for them to be online, anywhere they are without having to get a visa.

Andrew Bolton 49:41

This peace colloquy is historic is the first one that's truly international and online and models. The peace models mentioned that we're talking about.

Robin Linkhart 49:54

All righty. We have been so invigorating by this conversation today and the possibilities that are opening before us, and what a blessing in that we have found in the midst of a global pandemic as we're forced to consider migrating events to online, and the many ways that is allowing for people to participate that otherwise would not be able to not just those of us registering for the event, but the speakers themselves who will come from all over the world there virtually. So listeners if you would like to hear more from these voices, or on the topic of peace, check out the following episodes right here on Project Zion podcast, Episode 170, on the Community of Christ, non violence resolution featuring our same three guests who are joining us today. Episode 106 Cause of Zion and Episode 48 peace church and scripture both with Andrew Bolton. I want to thank you once again Andrew, Elray, and Joey for being with us today. It has been a joy. As always a very special thanks to all of our listeners. We hope to see you at the 2020 European peace colloquy, peaceful humanity, a new creation. And don't forget to check back often right here on project Zion podcast to explore other podcasts connected with this dynamic peace building event. This is your host Robin Linkhart and you are listening to project Zion podcast. Go out and make the world a better place. Take good care. Bye bye

Josh Mangelson 52:06

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