

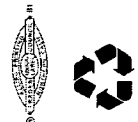


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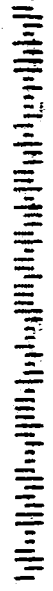
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# Integrities

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**WISDOM AND LOVE  
CARE AND COMMUNITY**

*Volume 29, No. 3 2016*

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**Dec 10**      **Winter Solstice/Light and Darkness Celebration**  
 Sunday at 4:30 p.m. Potluck - No Charge  
 Lake Freedom • 60 Sunflower Lane  
 hosted by Bill and Karen Cane



*The Cosmic Fish, a drawing by Frederick Franck, is a symbol of hopeful community. Each scale of the fish is a human face. And all the human faces together form a fish, which in early Christian tradition was a great symbol of hope. So the Cosmic Fish is a symbol of hopeful human beings united together for the salvation of the world.*

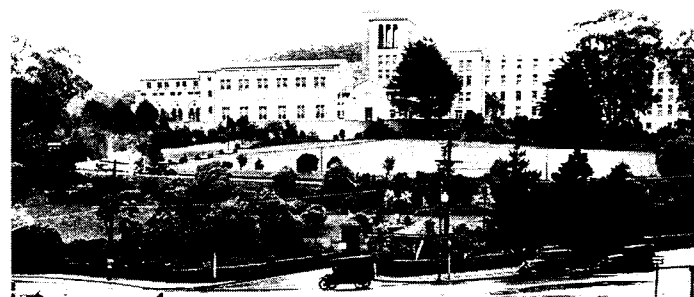
Cover: Photo by Karen Cane

## WISDOM AND LOVE, CARE AND COMMUNITY

We have been reading *God's Hospital* by Victoria Sweet, M.D. , a book about Laguna Honda Hospital which was a wonderful part of old San Francisco. Dr. Sweet describes how the bureaucracy changed Laguna Honda from a community of caring and love into an impersonal facility.

There is a touching passage on how the grand old hospital had large wards with a head nurse in charge of each ward. Outside Inspectors were horrified when they saw one head nurse, in view of all the patients in her ward, *knitting!* This had to stop, they said. They did not take the time to find out *what* she was knitting. She was making sweaters and little blankets for each of her patients, many of whom were penniless and had come off the streets of San Francisco.

What the inspectors demanded was centralization and efficiency. But that came at a cost. The hospital ended up with many more “officials”, but fewer nurses and doctors devoted to patient care. Efficiency actually declined under the new regime.



*Old Laguna Honda Hospital circa 1936  
 Photo: San Francisco History Center, SF Public Library, courtesy Charles Ruiz collection*

In a bureaucratic world, it is hard for wisdom and love, community and caring to play a large part. These essential values seem more and more threatened.

### *Does Government Care?*

Noam Chomsky makes the simple observation that governments are not primarily committed to the good of their people. If they were, he says, they would get rid of nuclear weapons and stop environmental degradation, the two greatest threats to life on earth.

But rather than getting rid of nuclear weapons, the US now has a plan to *upgrade* its nuclear weaponry. This plan, which will cost one *trillion* dollars includes redesigning nuclear warheads, and building new nuclear bombers, submarines, land-based missiles, weapons labs and production plants.

Global warming is the other enormous threat to our lives. Yet a majority of Congresspersons and many representatives of Big Money either deny global warming, or choose to do nothing about it.

**Large institutions preserve the steps that human beings have already taken. This is what they are good for and good at. But don't expect them to lead us into the future. Only groups of conscious and spirited human beings can do that.**

Wisdom and love, caring and community, are hard to find in our major institutions. So where do we look for such values?

### *Communities Formed by Exceptional Persons*

Myles Horton used to say, "Well, large institutions, you can try to change them. You can gather all your energy and give them a push, and you feel like they may have budged a little bit. So then you give another push, and feel they may have budged again. And then you think you might be getting close to the edge, so you give one **big** push. . . *And you fall off!*"

Myles concentrated on smaller communities. One wonders if there could have been a Civil Rights movement like the one we had, if Myles had not been bringing blacks and whites together starting in the 1930's. Young people who became Civil Rights leaders spent time at Highlander Center as children. *We Shall Overcome* started there. And it was after she experienced a session at Highlander that Rosa Parks refused to step to the back of the bus. Thus, a relatively small number of dedicated groups of people eventually brought about a movement which changed and is still changing American History.

Many small communities form around exceptional individuals like Myles. I have known some of them, and I still marvel at what they accomplished.

Page Smith, who was the first provost at the University of California at Santa Cruz, resigned in protest when the University

fired Paul Lee for not publishing enough. “What do you want,” Page asked, “more bad books being published, or more good teachers teaching?” After his resignation, Page started the “Penny University” and the William James Society. Many people were drawn into these community groups, which concentrated on ongoing learning, on helping the homeless—on wisdom, love and caring.

Howard Edminster made the outrageous claim that “I wouldn't have been any good if I hadn't been a drunk!” Howard learned wisdom and love and caring and community through Alcoholics Anonymous, and he spread that message to many people. AA concentrates on community and love and caring.

Dorothy Day took care of the poor and the hungry during the Great Depression, and founded the first Catholic Worker Houses. When the city of New York told her she had to get a restaurant permit to feed the hungry, she told the City that she would march the hungry down to City Hall each day so that the city could feed them! (The City quickly issued a permit!) We picked her up once after she was in jail for protesting the treatment of the farmworkers. “That was one of the nicest jails I've ever been in,” she said! The officials were very kind to us.” The Catholic Worker communities she founded, which feed and house the poor, now number about 150 throughout the world.

### *The Underground Railroad*

We take pride in the Underground Railroad now, as if it were part of our heritage, and somehow testifies to our rejection of

slavery. Yet the railroad consisted of mere hundreds (no more than a thousand) white people, and all of them were committing felonies at the time. Slavery was part of US law, and helping slaves escape was a felony in every state, North and South. But again, small communities of courageous people made a difference.

Black people were more numerous in the Railroad. Harriet Tubman, a fearless black leader of the Underground Railroad, will soon appear on the US twenty-dollar bill.

### *The Sanctuary Movement*

The Sanctuary Movement had many similarities to the Underground Railroad. When we joined the Sanctuary Movement in the 1980's, we were a small number of local people. The movement was made up of people scattered throughout the United States. They were dedicated to protecting Salvadoran and

**It takes a minimum of thirty years for any major social change to become established in a society. You can't just work at something for a few years, and then say it didn't work. Peace and justice are the work of generations, and in difficult times, what is important is to keep the spirit alive and pass it on to others.**

Guatemalan refugees from being sent back to their countries, where they might very easily have been persecuted or killed.

Under US law at that time, to help a Salvadoran or Guatemalan was a felony, (just as it had been a felony in the US to help a runaway slave before the Civil War). The Reagan administration had determined that El Salvador and Guatemala were *friendly* governments which would not persecute their own people! So even though we were following International Law, and even though the US Administration was outrageously wrong, we were all considered felons!

I remember a poignant moment when we learned that Sanctuary members in Arizona had been arrested. Don Ramon, who had been a religion teacher in El Salvador, gathered us together to pray for those who had been arrested. "They join Jesus and Martin Luther King and many others, who were also arrested," Ramon said. Don Ramon had escaped from El Salvador in a hidden compartment under the bed of a pickup truck, after eleven of his fellow religion teachers had been beheaded by the Salvadoran army.

Years later, the US government was found to be in violation of the law, and the refugees who were still around got new trials. But it was small communities that helped them, and governments that persecuted them.

## School of the Americas Watch

The SOA WATCH is a movement which began with a small group of people in 1990. It has been successful in getting a number of Latin American countries to stop sending their troops for training at Fort Benning, Georgia, where future officers of Latin American militaries were influenced to do the bidding of the US when they returned to their countries.

That small group of SOA people is now a very large movement, and the SOA will be holding a vigil at the US-Mexican border in October of 2016. Their goals are the following:

- End US military, economic, and political interventions in the Americas
  - De-militarize the borders
  - End the racist systems that criminalize and kill migrants, refugees, and communities of color
  - Respect, dignity, justice and self determination of communities



**Trends, projections, polls and statistics never cause the major changes in history. Major changes come about because some people passionately believe in something. Those who go against the trends and give their lives to what they believe in are the ones who change history.**



*Protesters in Honduras—this scene can be found throughout the world—people who are trying to change history.*

## IF-WHEN

IF-WHEN, which has been a part of IF for many years now, is a community that meets each week, discusses the Scriptures, and gives money to wonderful causes—many thousands of dollars every year. And Bill Leininger has been fighting for the disadvantaged for years and years, for farmworkers, hotel workers, for a just minimum wage, for countless just causes.



*Bill Leininger*

## *Communities IF Has Helped*

Here at IF we have had the privilege to be associated with large numbers of small communities throughout the world. We have been able to assist groups of women weavers, garbage workers learning worm composting, poor people building their own homes, groups of people working non-violently in very violent situations. IF has simply tried to help these communities do what was in their hearts to do.

Such small groups are largely hidden from sight. Elected officials, large corporations and powerful individuals are most often the ones in the news.

There are so many small communities that we know nothing about—groups of people who quietly work for a sane world. They

do not advertise themselves. But they help hold the world together. We need to keep their images in our minds, and thank them for their service to humanity.



*IF empowering young and old to work together to bring about positive change.*

*Supporters enjoying Latin America Dinner sponsored by IF*



*Various kitchen projects have been sponsored by IF in Peru and Mexico throughout the years.*



*The new home on the left sharply contrasts with the previous dwelling on the right. One of many home projects by volunteers from IF in Guatemala and other Latin American countries.*

## BIG IDEAS FOR SMALL COMMUNITIES

We asked Bob Aldridge to send us the plans and big ideas for all of us (and for humanity) that his group has been working on. The challenges they present seem overwhelming, but they give us a broad vision of what needs to be worked on for a hopeful future.

### CONSTRUCTIVE PROGRAM FOR EARTHLINGS OF THE 21ST CENTURY

by Bob Aldridge

*Today's nonviolent movements comprise hundreds of organizations reacting to tens of issues. They are divided and ineffective. Proactive means to act in anticipation of future problems or needs. An excellent example was Gandhi's Constructive Program which was the heart of his liberation campaign. It addressed 15 India-wide problems. Solving them facilitated self-help and crossed all ethnic lines—everyone became involved. In March 2015 a brainstorming group called the Proactive Nonviolence Cooperative was formed. Currently we are formulating a Constructive Program for today's world. It is audacious. The scope is global and the reform package is comprehensive. It challenges the world's social change movements to unify in achieving a monumental planetary goal. Below is the 3rd draft.*

We citizens of Planet Earth recognize that our home in the Universe is a delicate balance of forces and phenomena with a finite quantity of natural resources. In order to live more harmoniously as stewards of this celestial globe, and for the benefit of future generations, we see the need for widening circles of caring

communities that accommodate diversity for all. By “caring” we mean empathizing with the humanness in each of us while detesting the violence that humanness often causes. “Accommodating diversity” means recognizing as a fact that each person is unique concerning ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs, and other ideologies; and respecting that fact. It entails exploring those differences in a safe and nurturing environment that transcends simply tolerating our uniqueness. This is the seed for a democracy that is truly of the people, by the people, and for the people. Attaining this vision requires the following initial steps:

1. Immediately commence active participation in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to halt and then reverse global warming. This is a here-and-now global crisis that is long past a state of emergency.

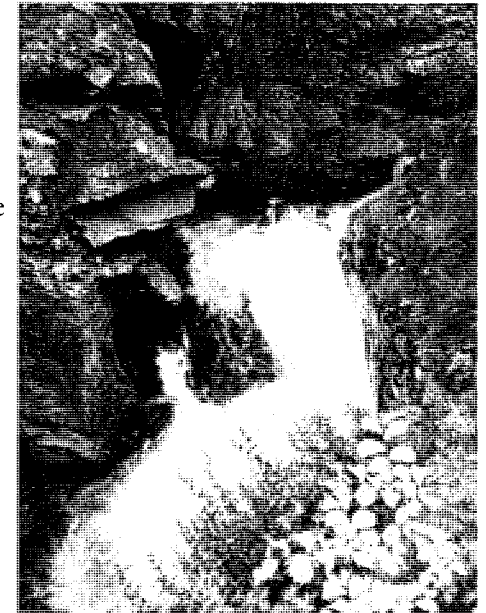


photo by Karen Cane



2. Restore transparency in governments at all levels.
  - a. Declassify all documents that invoke secrecy to deny public access to information. This in particular refers to agencies such as the US CIA, Russian KGB, UK MI6, French DGSI, German BND, and similar organizations in other countries.
  - b. Bring “untouchable” topics out for public discussion.
  - c. Break up the military-industrial complex whose maladies will become apparent with transparency.
3. Reduce military spending by half and continue annual reductions until paying for violence is eliminated.
  - a. Halt the modernization of nuclear forces.
  - b. Simultaneously, initiate meaningful negotiations for nuclear disarmament including *all* nations, and then proceed to total and general disarmament, according to the “Good Faith Clause” (Article 6) of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty.
  - c. Pull foreign troops out of Afghanistan, Iraq, and the Middle East immediately. Then proceed to bring all other deployed troops back to their home countries. If protection is needed in-country after withdrawal, call on the UN Protective Forces.
4. Promote small businesses and free enterprise.
  - a. Provide financing for startups in planet-friendly and life-sustaining enterprises.

- b. Break up the monopolies of large chains and other corporate conglomerates which rely on the “endless growth imperative” to satisfy stockholders.
  - c. Require strict accountability and transparency for corporations.
  - d. Remove laws, customs, and any other implication that give corporations the same rights as “persons.”
5. Use the money redirected from military budgets to finance socially useful programs which include:
  - a. Funding for immediate social needs including but not limited to poverty, homelessness, drug & alcohol rehabilitation, and crime prevention.
  - b. Provide autonomous but transparent public education systems (including college) available to all youth.
  - c. Provide funding and structure for defining nonviolent solutions to all conflict from interpersonal to international.
  - d. Provide education on Basic Civic Literacy regarding how an individual should function in a Democracy, including responsibilities.
  - e. Provide health care that meets everyone’s needs.
6. Set up immigration systems that respect human rights and dignity; and which can expand to a world without borders.
7. Put global pressure on Israel to recognize Palestine and set up meaningful negotiations on borders.

We can't do everything, but we all can do something. We work without knowing what the results of our labors will be. We have a tendency to look up at what the media present to us: Trump, elections, a bitterly divided world. But we might do better by looking around us—at friends and communities of friends. For that may very well be where our hopes lie.

**Some people have to come too early so that others can arrive on time. There will always have to be groups of people who begin something long before its time has come: people who begin to make a story happen before that story is widely established. It doesn't take faith to go along with what you see all about you. What takes faith is getting involved in a new story which hasn't happened yet, which has not yet become history.**

## Membership Form

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