

June 2007

The Poverty Program

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

JUL 22, 6:30 PM CONG. AHAVAS ACHIM, chairperson Rabbi Stanley Sadinsky
GENOCIDE - Movie *GHOSTS OF RWANDA*

AUG 19, 2PM TBA, chairperson Whitney Erskine
AIDS/HIV - Movie *FACING AIDS*

SEP 16, 2 PM BELLEVILLE CHURCH, chairperson Helen Hatcher
UN Peace Event- Movie *PEACE ONE DAY*

OCT TBA: UNITARIAN CHURCH, chairperson Rob Burnham
Millennium Goals, Vol. Job Fair

NOV TBA: Discussion and Planning for 2008

*If you would like to become involved with any of the programs, email
povertyprogram@gmail.com.*

GENOCIDE

JULY 22, 6:30 PM, CONGREGATION AHAVAS ACHIM
(Please note different time)

Rabbi Stanley Sadinsky, chairperson, will give a presentation on genocide, followed by the movie *Ghosts of Rwanda* and discussion following the movie.

GHOSTS OF RWANDA documents the genocide that brought about the slaughter of nearly one million citizens in that country. The film interviews many of the military and political leaders who played a part in the horrific events including such international figures as Madeleine Albright and Kofi Annan. The film concludes with a study of how these events both changed and have not changed the international community's response to similar situations. ~ Perry Seibert, All Movie Guide

Let's all try to attend the July 22nd presentation!

NEWSLETTER: Letters to the editor, articles, calendar events may be submitted by the 15th by mail: 280 High Street, Newburyport, MA or email: povertyprogram@gmail.com. If you would like to receive the newsletter or stop receiving it, please contact us.

WEBSITE: Charities: if you would like to be listed or linked, or list volunteer or donation needs, please email (povertyprogram@gmail.com) or call Catherine at 978-463-0507. Events for the calendar may be submitted at any time but if you would like to be listed in the newsletter, please submit by the 15th.

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JUNE ARMS DEALS

This month's program was at the Quaker Meeting House in Amesbury and was chaired by Sam Baily. There were two movies shown, the Arms Supermarket, a 60 Minutes documentary and another documentary, Arms for the Poor. Sam Baily gave a short presentation prior to the showing of the documentaries. He made some powerful, thought-provoking statements: we "don't know the fear and uncertainty that the third world knows" and as a parent "imagine not being able to protect your children. I can't imagine that level of fear".

Some facts about arms deals:

- Every year approximately 500,000 men, women and children are killed by armed violence. That's a person killed every minute.
- There are 639 million small arms and light weapons in the world today. 8 million new weapons are produced every year.
- There are 50-70 million AK-47s in the world today - the most widespread weapon in the world.
- The five permanent members of the UN Security Council (China, France, Russia, Britain and the US) account for 88% of the world's conventional arms exports.
- Between 1998 and 2001, the US, UK and France earned more income from arms sales to developing countries than they gave in aid.
- There is no Global Arms Trade Treaty. The global arms trade is unregulated even though Amnesty International, Oxfam and others have been campaigning for it since October of 2003.

The movies made clear that weapons create poverty, violence and a tremendous price has been paid in the third world because of the easy access to weapons. It is clear that the arms industry is making enormous profits without consideration to the consequences of their product. There is also a price being paid here in the United States. Simply put: the military budget is eating the US social service programs budget. The United States is number one in military spending and we are number one in child poverty of the industrialized nations.

Comments made after the presentation were "How can five countries cause so much harm in the world? How can the few impose their will on so many? As individual citizens, do we share in the responsibility for what is happening in the world? What is the spiritual grounding of the United States - we claim to be number one, but number one of what? What can we do?" The UN Secretary General, Mr. Ban Ki-Moon is considering an arms treaty. Please consider signing the petition at the end of the newsletter which also has more information on arms deals.

"These brothers and sisters of mine join millions of people -- at least 20 million people who since World War II died in conventional conflicts in wars in developing countries as a result of weapons supplied by the five permanent members of the Security Council." Jose Ramos-Horta

"Great powers must be made to realize that selling weapons indiscriminately may bring them business, contracts, checks, but not honor. Usually, adults fight and children die. Usually, adults hate one another and children pay the price for their hatred." Elie Wiesel

"Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired, signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed. This world in arms is not spending money alone. It is spending the sweat of its laborers, the genius of its scientists, the hope of its children. This is not a way of life at all, in any true sense." (Dwight Eisenhower)

For more information:

- www.controlarms.org
- www.iansa.org
- Amnesty International www.amnestyUSA.org
- Oxfam www.oxfamamerica.org
- halo.usa.com
- www.afsc.org

Thanks to the many people who made this program a success!

VOLUNTEERING

VOLUNTEERS FOR PEACE: Founded in 1982, VFP is a non-profit membership organization. We do not have any political or religious agenda. We are partner to a large network of similar organizations worldwide. Our goal is to work toward a more peaceful world through the promotion of International Voluntary Service (IVS) projects, historically known as International Workcamps, and the exchange of volunteers. Through our international alliances, we work together to help communities meet local needs and some of the goals of the UN's Millenium Goals. For more information: <http://www.vfp.org/index>.

Global Volunteer Network: Our vision is to connect people with communities in need. We do this by supporting the work of local community organisations in countries through the placement of international volunteers. For more information: <http://www.volunteer.org.nz/programs/>

PETTENGILL HOUSE & SALVATION ARMY

Poverty in our area is increasing. Please help.

The Pettengill House and Salvation Army are serving more people this year - more than 12,000 more meals at Pettengill House - and are in need of our assistance in restocking their pantries. Please make a monetary donation or donate food (pasta & sauce, canned goods, mac & cheese, juice, cooking oil, condiments) or toiletry items to these organizations. The Salvation Army can also accept fresh and frozen fruit and vegetables.

VOLUNTEERING IDEAS TO GET YOU STARTED

Homeless Shelters, Food Banks, Museums, Parks, Tutoring, Mentoring, Phone Banks, Blood Banks, Hospitals, Senior Citizens, Youth Groups, Political Campaigns, Libraries and more. There are any number of places and organizations that could use some of your time. For more ideas: http://www.justgive.org/html/don_info/volunteerideas.html

Youth News

Summer Opportunities

Visions: A coed summer service program for teens ages 14-18 blending ambitious service, cross-cultural living and learning, adventurous exploration. Since our inception in 1989, and every season since, VISIONS has been setting the standard for cross-cultural summer service programs. Our programs in the Caribbean West Indies, North, Central, and South America blend hands-on hard work, intercultural living and learning, and adventurous exploration. <http://www.visionsserviceadventures.com/index.htm>

Habitat for Humanity: The Youth Programs department at Habitat for Humanity International seeks to engage the imagination, energy and hope of young people, ages 5 to 25, worldwide in order to productively and responsibly involve them as leaders in the work of Habitat for Humanity. Youth Programs believes that youth are not only the future of Habitat--they are also doing amazing things today! <http://www.habitat.org/youthprograms/default.aspx>

Save the Children: One of the best ways you can support the needs of millions of children is by advocating on their behalf before one of the most powerful institutions in the world — the U.S. Congress. <http://www.savethechildren.org/get-involved/advocacy/>

NetAid: The world can beat global poverty in a generation, but we need concerned citizens like you to get involved. If you're ready to make a real difference in the lives of the world's poor, NetAid can help you get started. There are lots of ways to take action: Check out this page for ideas! <http://www.netaid.org/high-school-student.html>

Youth Volunteer Network: Lists of organizations where you can volunteer, toolkits for advocacy and volunteer projects. Lots of information. <http://www.networkforgood.youthnoise.com/ta/toolkit.php>

World Wildlife Fund Youth Volunteer Program: WWF is running a new, global volunteer programme for a select number of young people. http://www.panda.org/how_you_can_help/volunteer/volunteer/index.cfm

Youth Volunteer Network of America: <http://www.yvca.org/main/whatis.php>

Youth Editor: The Poverty Program Newsletter is looking for editors, reporters either an individual or group of young people who would like to work together to write, edit, and contribute articles, pictures to this section of the newsletter. Please email povertyprogram@gmail.com or call 978-463-0507 if you are interested.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Please submit events by the 20th of each month.

WEEKLY PEACE RALLY

Every Sunday at noon at Market Square.

HOMELESS AWARENESS NIGHT FUNDRAISER

JUNE 30 8:30 PM - 9 AM, COST \$20

WORLD WAR MEMORIAL STADIUM NEWBURYPORT HIGH

SHALUPE FOUNDATION

CONGOLESE INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATION

JUNE 30, 3-11:30, ST. MICHAELS, LYNN, MA

FOR MORE INFORMATION: 781-595-9342

LIVE AID CONCERT

JULY 1 <http://liveearth.msn.com/>

POVERTY PROGRAM GENOCIDE

JULY 22 6:30 PM Ghosts of Rwanda, Congregation Ahavas Achim

Lowell Folk Festival: July 27-29, 2007

Where else can you hear Bluegrass, Blues, Jazz, Cajun, Armenian, Cape Verdean, Indian, Irish, Brazilian, Polish Polka, French, Congolese to Honky-Tonk Country?

If you haven't been to the Lowell Folk Festival - GO!

It is a wonderful time with great music, great food and meeting people from all over the world.

POVERTY PROGRAM HIV/AIDS

AUG. 12, 2 PM BELLEVILLE CHURCH

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL MEETING

AUGUST 16, 7 PM (THIRD THURSDAY MONTHLY)

POVERTY PROGRAM PEACE DAY

SEPT. 23, 2 PM BELLEVILLE CHURCH

THE DARFUR/DARFUR EXHIBIT

COMING TO BOSTON SEPTEMBER 7, 2007

Samantha Powers to speak, YoYoMa will do a closing piece.

DARFUR/DARFUR is a traveling exhibit of digitally-projected changing images that provide visual education about the richly multi-cultural region while exposing the horrors of the ongoing humanitarian crisis. [darfur.org](http://www.thedevilcameonhorseback.com/home.html), <http://www.thedevilcameonhorseback.com/home.html>

MOVIE RECOMMENDATIONS

Devil's Miner: A documentary film about child labor in a Bolivian silver mine. The movie chronicles several days in the life of Barilio Vargas, a 14 year old boy and his younger brother who both must work in the mines to provide for themselves and their mother.

The Constant Gardener: Based on a novel by John Le Carre, The Constant Gardener is a film about one man's desire to ignore the reality around him; a film about Western exploitation of Africa; a film about the man's wife's desire to help the poor and get the truth to the people in the western world about what this large pharmaceutical company is doing; a film about a man who, after his wife was murdered, finally had to get involved and take action.

ARTICLES

But Poverty is Depressing!

by Catherine Yesair Gould

In speaking to people about the poverty program, I keep hearing "but poverty is depressing"! Indeed, why would anyone want to spend an afternoon learning about such things as child soldiers, refugees, starvation, malnutrition, wars, undrinkable water, homelessness etc.? We all have so many more important things to do in our lives that give us pleasure. We are all very busy -- too busy to take time out of our lives to learn about what is happening in the other half of the world. But many of us do just that and yes, it is depressing. Yes, it makes you want to cry, cry out for this world that is such a mess; cry out at the injustice of what is happening; cry for the children who have suffered so.

But I always, at the end of the program, come away feeling uplifted and motivated to do more. I come away amazed at the strength of the human spirit and amazed at what a child has endured - if they can live through the horrors, I can watch a movie and hear about their horrors for a couple of hours. I can become informed. I come away inspired by the others who attend the program. I come away knowing more amazing individuals who have started their own programs or who volunteer their time or who share their passion. I come away with more knowledge about a problem and come away with something that I as an individual can do to make a small change in the world. Some say that the world will go on as it has for centuries - a world of haves and have nots. People have been fighting poverty for centuries, so why bother doing anything - why bother learning about these issues? Because now we truly have an opportunity to end world poverty and if it continues, it will be because of our choice not to take action, our choice not to donate, our choice not to learn about the problems in the world. We can either do nothing and believe that there will never be a better world, or we can believe in the possibilities of hope and take action and try to make the world a better place for all.

Are we making a change? We will never know whom we have helped nor whom we may have inspired to be a volunteer, write letters or donate more money to charity. We will never know what changes in the world our little poverty program has made. What we do know is that we as a group of presenters, as a group of attendees uplift each other; we do know that we are shedding light on some of the worlds' problems; and we do know that we are, in our small way, making the world a better place. And perhaps Carl Sandburg's famous quote will one day be a reality: "Someday they'll give a war and no one will come".

"People think that unless they can devote themselves like Mother Teresa, they will not make a difference; and this is not true. One person reaching out to one person can make an incredible difference, both in the life of the one being touched, and those that he touches." Alfonso Wyatt

"When the Nazis came first for the communists, I was silent because I wasn't a communist. Then they came for the trade unionists, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a trade unionist. Then they came for the Jews, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Jew. Then they came for me, and by that time no one was left to speak up." Pastor Martin Niemöller

LITTLE THINGS THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE

HANG YOUR CLOTHES OUT TO DRY. LEAVE THE CAR IN THE GARAGE AND WALK.
IF YOU MUST USE AIR CONDITIONERS, HAVE THEM BE ENERGY EFFICIENT.

But I can rest only for a moment, for with freedom comes responsibilities, and I dare not linger, for my long walk is not yet ended."

Nelson Mandela
