

Peaceways

CENTRAL KENTUCKY COUNCIL FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE

December 2020

April Comes in November

by Margaret Gabriel, editor

Finally, some good news in 2020

On Nov. 1, we received a text from my son-in-law at 4:11 a.m. telling us that our granddaughter had arrived just an hour or so earlier after a hasty drive to hospital. They made it just in time, but she arrived before the doctor got to the delivery room! April Genevieve and the rest of the family are happy and healthy.

Dear April,

Since we learned you were on your way and would arrive in early November, I followed how many days it would be courtesy of a tote board on the set of “CBS This Morning.” Every day we learned the number of days until the presidential election. I kind of knew that your birthday was pegged for November 4, not November 3. but whatever. Fifty-six days. Thirty-three. Nineteen. I texted numbers to your mommy so many times, I think she was about to block me.

Thanks for coming a few days early. Your entry into the world was astonishingly fast and after that, blessedly uneventful. Born on November 1, you went home on November 2, and met Peggity and Papa Jim on November 3. You gave me someone to focus on in those couple of days before the election. Frequent updates about what you were doing (sleeping, mostly), when you were coming home and when we could come to visit you kept me from thinking only

about how many people had voted by mail and the length of the lines for voting in person. Would people wait?

After visiting you for the first time, we took off for home with Donald Trump ahead on Election Night with eight electoral votes (thanks, Kentucky!). Papa Jim and I didn’t talk much as we traveled I-64, listening to NPR election returns. When we got home, we watched returns on TV for a little while. Evident that there would be no final result that night — and, short of a landslide, we knew the outcome would be days or even weeks away — I went to bed with the radio tuned to NPR. (A “radio” is a funny little box that music or talking comes out of. Don’t bother asking Mommy — she knows nothing of this “radio.”) I didn’t sleep much. My mind kept going back to Election Night 2016. When I went to bed that night, I hoped the trend I was seeing would be reversed by morning. It wasn’t.

In 2020, we didn’t have Election Night; we had Election Week. It slogged on and it was almost as if the newsfeed on my phone was stuck. Every time I refreshed it read the same: Biden 263, Trump 214. I rejoiced when Nevada and Georgia flipped from Trump leading to Biden leading, but the number of electoral votes awarded was the same. Maddeningly the same.

You were just short of a week old when Joe Biden was declared the winner of the 2020 election. I’m happy and relieved to have a president of the United States who is even-tempered, decent, and kind. There is still a wicked amount of division in our country and in our government, but at least we have a chance for an age of civility after four years of snarky middle-of-the-night tweets, incomprehensible policy decisions that weighed heavily against people of color, and a White House that resembled a reality television show with its lead character focused more on TV ratings than the business of making serious decisions about the best way to lead our country forward.



April Genevieve Ricks

But even more than that, baby girl, I’m overjoyed that within your first week of life, the United States elected a woman as vice-president. Kamala Harris opens doors for you and for all your fellow baby girls. Girls and women have made tremendous strides since I was your age, but for generations, women had little if any power. Indeed, Nana, your great-grandmother, was born only a few years after women got the vote. For you, the future is unlimited. In many ways, that’s because of the “first” boxes that Kamala Harris checks off.

I suspect that for your whole life, when you announce 2020 as the year of your birth, people will roll their eyes and tell horror stories. But one great thing about this year — and the election of Kamala Harris underscores this reality — is that we’ve really started to grow into the truth that Black lives don’t just matter, but Black lives are important. Black lives and Black people bring their culture and their history, and our lives are richer for it. When your brother Connor was born, I wrote him a letter, too. I inserted some hope into that letter because I’m your Peggity and it’s what I do. But in 2018 I had to dig pretty deep to find it. With Joe Biden and Kamala Harris leading our country, hope is a little easier to find.

All my love,
Peggity

Gun Violence In America as of 11-25-20 2020 (year to date)

Killed	17,143
Suicide	21,780
Wounded	35,676

2019 (annual)

Killed	15,208
Wounded	29,501

Source: www.gunviolencearchive.org

Ranked Choice Voting meeting Jan. 7

At the last CKCPJ steering committee meeting Steve Katz reported on Rank the Vote, “a non-partisan organization formed to empower people across America to rapidly build grassroots movements in their own states to creating the preconditions for successful ballot or legislative campaigns,” according to its website.

The organization, which can be found at rankthevote.us, is helping organizers launch a Kentucky campaign for ranked choice voting with a kickoff meeting on Jan. 7.

The “Why RCV?” section of its website says, “People are fed up with unresponsive, gridlocked government dominated by powerful special interests.

“Bold grassroots leaders across the country are rising up to solve the source of the problem — our flawed election system.

“RCV is a simple fix to these problems.

“Instead of picking just one candidate, you can rank as many as you like on your ballot, in order of preference 1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc...

“This is my favorite, my first choice, but if they can’t win, don’t throw my vote away, count it for my second choice.’ and so on.

“You can always vote for the

candidate you are enthusiastic about without fear of wasting your vote—you have backup choices if your favorite can’t win. Your top choice is never harmed by ranking additional choices.

“Ballots are counted in ‘instant runoff rounds,’ where contestants receiving the fewest top-choices are eliminated and their supporters’ ballots are then counted toward the next choice indicated on each.

“This process ‘consolidates’ the voting power of like-minded voters, no matter how many candidates are running, rather than seeing the strength of their votes diluted and divided between multiple similar candidates.

“It means no more ‘spoiler problem.’ These rounds repeat until one candidate has the support of more than half of the voters. Because winning requires a broad majority of support, candidates need to earn their opponents’ supporters second- and third-place votes on the ballot.

“RCV is a simple but powerful solution that gives people a stronger voice and more choice when they vote.

For more in-depth information, see rankthevote.us and plan to attend the Zoom meeting on Jan. 7.

Email peacewayseditor@gmail.com to request the link for registration for the meeting.

The Central Kentucky Council for Peace and Justice

Board of Directors: Rebecca Ballard DiLoreto, Rick Clewett, Bilal El-Amin, Mary Ann Ghosal (secretary), Heather Hadi, Randolph Hollingsworth, Rahul Karanth, Steven Lee Katz (treasurer), Richard Mitchell, Bruce Mundy, Steve Pavey, Nadia Rasheed, Teddi Smith-Robillard, Craig Wilkie.

Peaceways Staff: Margaret Gabriel (editor); Penny Christian, Mary Ann Ghosal, Gail Koehler, Betsy Neale, Jim Trammel (proofreaders). The views expressed in *Peaceways* are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of CKCPJ.

Member Organizations: ACLU-Central Kentucky Chapter; Ahava Center for Spiritual Living; Amnesty International, UK Chapter; Bahá’ís of Lexington; Berea Friends Meeting; Bluegrass Central Labor Council, AFL-CIO; Bluegrass Domestic Violence Program; Bluegrass United Church of Christ; Catholic Action Center; Central Christian Church; Commission for Peace and Justice, Catholic Diocese of Lexington; Gay and Lesbian Services Organization; Humanist Forum of Central Kentucky; Hunter Presbyterian Church; Islamic Society of Central Kentucky; Jewish Federation of the Bluegrass; Kentuckians for the Commonwealth; Kentucky Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty, Central Kentucky Chapter; Kentucky Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights; Kentucky Resources Council; Lexington Fair Housing Council; Lexington Fairness; Lexington Friends Meeting; Lexington Hispanic Association (Asociación de Hispanos Unidos); Lexington Labor Council, Jobs with Justice Committee; Lexington Living Wage Campaign; Lexington Socialist Student Union; Maxwell Street Presbyterian Church; Newman Center at UK; North East Lexington Initiative; One World Film Festival; Students for Peace and Earth Justice (Bluegrass Community and Technical College); Peacecraft; The Plantory; Progress (student group at Transylvania University); Second Presbyterian Church; Shambhala Center; Sustainable Communities Network; Union Church at Berea; Unitarian Universalist Church of Lexington; United Nations Association, Bluegrass Chapter.



Peaceways is published 10 times a year by the Central Kentucky Council for Peace and Justice, 1588 Leestown Rd., Ste. 130-138, Lexington KY 40511. The next issue of *Peaceways* will appear in February 2021. Deadline for calendar items is Jan. 10. Contact (859) 488-1448 or email peacewayseditor@gmail.com.

The wise seek peace

Enjoy the blessings of the holiday season

Calendar for Peace & Justice

The council seeks to promote dialogue as a path to peace and justice. Consequently, we announce events that we do not necessarily endorse.

Fri., Dec. 4

Faith and Community Christmas Store, the portal for families to register to receive gifts for 2020 will be open beginning today. For time and location of pick-up, see the Catholic Action Center website or Facebook page. No volunteers needed.

Tues., Dec. 8

CKCPJ peace action committee, 4:30 - 6 p.m. The committee will meet online *via* Zoom. To receive the needed link to attend the meeting, email Richard Mitchell at rjmq47@twc.com.

Tues., Dec. 8

PFLAG Central Kentucky, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. Please go to the PFLAG Central Kentucky Facebook page before the meeting and register to join and receive the Zoom link.

Mon., Dec. 21

CKCPJ steering committee meeting, 5 - 6:30 p.m. The committee will meet online *via* Zoom. To receive the needed link to participate in the meeting, email Richard Mitchell at rjmq47@twc.com

Tues., Dec. 15

CKCPJ health care action team, 4:30-6 p.m. The committee will meet online *via* Zoom. To receive the needed link to attend the meeting, email Richard Mitchell at rjmq47@twc.com.

Tues., Jan. 5

CKCPJ peace action committee, 4:30 - 6 p.m. The committee will meet online *via* Zoom. To receive the needed link to attend the meeting, email Richard Mitchell at rjmq47@twc.com.

Thurs., Jan. 7

Rank the Vote meeting to discuss organizing a grassroots campaign for ranked choice voting in Kentucky. For more information, see page 2

Tues., Jan. 12

CKCPJ health care action team, 4:30-6 p.m. The committee will meet online *via* Zoom. To receive the needed link to attend the meeting, email Richard Mitchell at rjmq47@twc.com.

Mon., Jan. 18

Martin Luther King Holiday. For observances and celebrations, see the LFUCG website, lexingtonky.org.

Mon., Jan. 18

CKCPJ steering committee meeting, 5 - 6:30 p.m. The committee will meet online *via* Zoom. To receive the needed link to participate in the meeting, email Richard Mitchell at rjmq47@twc.com. Date may be changed in observance of the MLK Holiday.

.....

Centro de San Juan Diego provides services in Cardinal Valley area

Centro de San Juan Diego, an Apostolate of the Catholic Diocese of Lexington, has opened in the heart of Cardinal Valley and will serve the needs of the neighborhood community, which is primarily home to 10,000 Hispanic immigrants. In addition, the Centro's services will extend to Hispanics in surrounding communities.

Construction of the Centro was funded by Deacon Jim Bennett and his wife, Dot, and will offer a variety of social services, including medical screenings and monitoring, counseling for individuals and families for common disorders like depression and addiction, legal services, classes for English as a second language, family nutrition, and consular activities. The Centro will also include a chapel for faith-based activities.

"I am grateful to the Bennetts for driving a project that will allow that community and our whole community to come together in a spirit of generous service," said Bishop John Stowe.

Brown girl, brown girl
What do you see?
I see a Vice President
That looks like me

Brown girl, brown girl
What do you do?
I fought I hoped
I spoke what was true

Brown girl, brown girl
What do you know?
That there are strong women
Who want me to grow

Brown girl, brown girl
What do you feel?
That #blackgirlmagic
Will help us all heal

Brown girl, brown girl
What do you see?
A world that sees my skin
Before it sees me

Brown girl, brown girl
Whatcha gonna do?
March, fight and create
Till I make this world new

Brown girl, brown girl
How are you so strong?
'Cause I got queens in my blood
To help push me along



By Lesle Honore,
(copyright 2017, 2020)
Leslehonore.com

Waiting is never easy

by Bishop John Stowe

I doubt that any of us expected to wake up on Nov. 4 ready to hold hands and sing *Kumbaya* with the neighbors whose yard signs offended us for the last several weeks. But I for one was hoping for a resounding vote for participatory democracy as we know it, for a measured and scientific approach to the current global pandemic, for humanitarian and life-affirming policies at our southern border, for affirmation of human rights and dignity, for confirming the importance of three separate but equal branches of government in our constitution, for civility and decency, for facts and the truth, for progress in dismantling systematic racism ... for normalcy.

Instead, even with final results hours, days or weeks away, I feel like I woke up on Christmas morning with coal in my stocking. Not only a letdown, but an occasion to ask, “What did I do wrong?” or “What did I get wrong?”

Was it misplaced to think that our American values and ideals, never fully realized but always a solid point of reference, would drive the majority of voters? Was I naïve in trusting that people know better than to accept as fact that which is clear and obvious fabrication? I hope not, but I still find myself questioning. As a person of faith, I look towards God for answers knowing full well that God is pretty mysterious when it comes to methods of revelation. Still, God speaks. And the words that came to me so clearly in prayer this morning are from 1 Thessalonians 5:18 — words I am much more comfortable recommending to others than putting into practice myself — “in all circumstances give thanks.”

Gratitude is an attitude changer for sure. When I began to figure out how to give thanks, I thought of our Black sisters and brothers joined by hundreds and thousands of others on the streets of our cities and rural communities to affirm that Black Lives Matter. I thought of the Parkland High School students who worked so hard

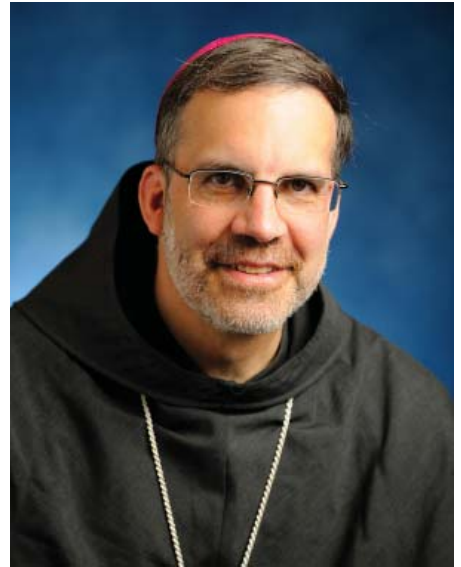
to remind the nation that we are to be self-governing and want so badly to spare others the horror that they experienced. I thought of Dreamers who continue to work hard and study hard and embody all of the values, effort, and energy of my immigrant grandparents and those who came to this land in previous generations. I thought of the outcry that this nation made so loudly that the separation of children from parents at the border had to stop — at least temporarily. I thought of groups of people all over the nation who joined in prayer and with an eager desire to reconcile their highest Catholic morals with the choices in front of them on the ballot.

And I thought of the women who first took to the streets to demonstrate that in a democracy all voices have to be heard. I thought of Pope Francis in his latest encyclical asking aloud why we didn’t allow the global threat of a pandemic to solidify our global solidarity. I also thought about the wisdom, if not the impracticality of the path forward that he indicates, of the recognition that we are all brothers and sisters needing to work for the common good.

I am grateful to be associated with Pax Christi and ever-more appreciative of the three-fold process employed by our members: prayer, study and action. While my first instinct this morning was to act, I realized it was better to start with prayer—and what could I do anyway? Prayer will lead to study as I realize the need not just to complain about the way things are and what didn’t happen, but to ponder and discern a way forward.

The time for action will come soon enough. Whoever attains the magic 270 electoral votes will need to be held accountable. Whoever leads us forward will need help in uniting a bitterly divided nation. Whoever emerges as president will need to be reminded that our democracy is fragile, to be cherished, and needs serious repair.

Waiting is never easy. At the end of this month, we enter into our annual



liturgical waiting as the world around us rushes to celebrate the commerce of Christmas. When we wait in Advent, we are told it is not merely a passive waiting — we are to wait and watch and discover the signs of the Messiah’s nearness even as we wait. I hope we can transfer that lesson to our present political circumstances.

We pray for a just and peaceful conclusion to these elections and for all who will be affected by the outcome. We study the story of our democracy, the teachings of our faith, and how they work together to promote the dignity of the human person and progress for the common good. And we will work to make that vision become real, and to be instruments of healing for all who have been excluded and do not have the luxury of waiting.



Bishop Stowe is the bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Lexington and the bishop-president of Pax Christi USA.

**White supremacy
won't die until white
people see it as a
white issue they need
to solve rather than a
black issue they need
to empathize with.**

Submissions to *Peaceways*

Articles submitted to *Peaceways* should show an awareness of and sensitivity to the CKCPJ's mission and concerns.

Feature articles should be no longer than 500 words, unless you are willing to have the piece cut to fit one page of *Peaceways* text. Pieces will be edited for clarity.

Please include references in the text for all quotations, statistics, and unusual facts. End-notes or footnotes are not used.

Please query submissions to peacewayseditor@gmail.com before writing a feature article intended solely for *Peaceways*.

For all submissions, the author's name, address, and phone number should appear on the body of the submitted text.

If you submit material that has been published or that you are also submitting to other publishers, be sure to indicate this.

Also include information about your relationship to any organization or issue mentioned in the article, for inclusion in a biographical reference at the end of the story.

Submissions should be made in Word format *via* email. Book reviews are usually solicited by the editor, but we welcome inquiries from potential reviewers.

Submission deadline is the 10th of each month. *Peaceways* is published monthly except January.

Support CKCPJ by linking
your Kroger Plus card
to #16439 at
krogercommunityrewards.com.

MONTHLY MEETINGS

Check with website for times when meetings are resumed

CKCPJ Steering Committee Meetings, third Monday, 5 p.m., Quaker Meeting House, 649 Price Ave. More info: (859) 488-1448 or peaceandjusticeky@gmail.com. All are welcome.

Interfaith Prayer Vigil for Peace, every Thursday, 5:30 - 6 p.m. at Triangle Park (corner of Broadway and Main Street) in downtown Lexington. Contact Richard Mitchell, (859) 327-6277.

Migrant Network Coalition, first Monday, noon - 1:15 p.m., GLOBAL LEX, 1306 Versailles Road, Lexington. Contact Lindsay Mattingly, lmatingly@lexpublib.org, (859) 231-5514.

PFLAG Central Kentucky, second Tuesday, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. LGBTQ individuals of all ages, family members, friends and allies are welcome. St. Michael's Episcopal Church, 2025 Bellefonte Dr., Lexington. Visit info@pflagcentralky.org or (859) 338-4393. Speakers followed by confidential support group meeting.

Bluegrass Fairness of Central Kentucky, second Tuesday, 7:30 p.m., Lexington Public Central Library, 140 E. Main St., Lexington. Contact Craig Cammack, chair, (859) 951-8565 or info@lexfair.org.

Wednesday Night GLSO "Heart to Heart" discussion group, 7 p.m., Pride Center, 389 Waller Ave., Lexington. GLSO operates Kentucky's only Pride Center, where they have quietly provided services to the GLBTQQA community for decades. More info, Pride Center hours, and other links at www.glsso.org.

Humanist Forum of Central Kentucky, first Thursday, 7 p.m., Great Hall of the Unitarian Universalist Church, 3564 Clays Mill Rd., Lexington. The Forum is a Chapter of the American Humanist Association. Meetings are open to people of all beliefs willing to express their opinions in a civil manner. Child care is provided. Contact President Staci Maney, staci@olliegee.com or (859) 797-2662.

Kentuckians for the Commonwealth, third Thursday, 7 p.m., Episcopal Diocese Mission House at Fourth St. and MLK Blvd, Lexington. Contact Beth Howard, (859) 276-0563.

NAMI Lexington Support Groups, every Sunday, 2:30 - 4 p.m. Participation Station, 869 Sparta Ct., Lexington. Call (859) 272-7891 or visit www.namilex.org.

Christian-Muslim Dialogue Program, fourth Saturday, 10 a.m. - noon. All are welcome. Locations vary, call (859) 277-5126. The Christian-Muslim dialogue promotes understanding and mutual respect between Christians and Muslims. By exploring moral, cultural and political factors shaping the current context, the program promotes personal and collective responsibility to build a more just and peaceful world.

Dance Jam, every Tuesday, 5:30 - 7 p.m., Quaker Meeting House, 649 Price Ave. Move to the extent you are able. Sponsored by Motion Matters, \$7 per session to cover space rental. Contact Pamela, info@motionmatters.org, (859) 351-3142.

Movies with Spirit, second Friday of every month. Unitarian Universalist Church, 3564 Clays Mill Road, Lexington. Potluck at 6 p.m., film at 7.

National Action Network, third Thursday each month, 7 - 8:30 p.m. at the Central Library, Lexington.

Showing Up for Racial Justice, second Tuesday of the month, 5:30-7:30 p.m., Wild Fig Coffee and Books, 726 N. Limestone, Lexington.

To include a regular meeting of your organization in this space, contact Margaret Gabriel, peacewayseditor@gmail.com.



The Central Kentucky Council
for Peace and Justice
1588 Leestown Rd., Ste. 130-138
Lexington KY 40511
Issue #338 • December 2020

*If you can't feed a hundred
people, then feed just one.*
~ Mother Teresa

Book Review

Seeing the pattern after we tame the spiky ball

Ten Lessons for a Post-Pandemic World.
By Fareed Zakaria. Published Oct. 6, 2020
by W.W. Norton & Co., New York. 319
pages.

Reviewed by Jim Trammel

I envy large-scale thinkers like Fareed Zakaria of CNN and the *Washington Post*, who draws on the enormous canvas of day-to-day world events to forecast societal destinations and arrival times.

Me, I'm just a remora, helplessly riding along on this shark-swift intellect. He's a giant, stepping forward first on this topic, with *Ten Lessons for a Post-Pandemic World*.

Indeed, he's so sharp he knew as far back as 2017 that the U.S. was more vulnerable to a global health crisis than in "Spanish" flu times in 1918. He pointed out then that compact cities, increased air travel, and encroachment on the animal kingdom all worked to intensify the danger, just like Columbus killed his native friends (per the Newman quote; check out the entire song). Our social habits can bring on disease. This book recaps that process and predicts massive social shifts advancing in the pandemic's wake.

This is not a typical collection of day-by-day newspaper columns from which are extrapolated shaky long-term conclusions, though his chapter subheadings sometimes lead me to believe some pre-existing columns have been flowed in. Zakaria's thoughts are sound and his insights can be trusted; he seems independent of bias.

The scientist who helped eradicate smallpox said, "Outbreaks are inevitable; pandemics are optional." Smallpox was controlled through international and societal cooperation; now, we have politicized ourselves out of effective masking, business and school closings, and other COVID control measures.

Columbus sailed for India,
Found Salvador instead;
He shook hands with the natives there,
And soon they all were dead —
They got TB and typhoid and athlete's foot,
Diphtheria and the flu.
"Scuse me! Great Nations coming through!"

— "The Great Nations of Europe," Randy Newman

When COVID emerged from the wet markets of Wuhan, China failed initially by attempting suppression. We compounded the error with our scattershot response. Then economics made matters worse. The pandemic worsened income gaps and social inequality in a time when a sense of shared concern would have allowed for a more unified and effective pandemic response. America is notoriously short on trust and long on inequality these days.

Zakaria notes the tectonic social shifts COVID-19 has brought about and will bring about by shaking up norms. A \$1,200 check for everybody has helped even budget hawks accept the idea that government should look after its citizens and businesses. Through such tremors, systems are shifted; priorities rise and fall in the COVID aftermath.

COVID has been the late-breaking sinister plot twist in a disaster movie that raises the stakes for all. Against the already unstable background created by the 9-11 attack and the financial crash of 2008, the election of 2016 polarized us further. Even the Trumpists knew as they voted that the system was broken—their error was believing Trump could fix it.

Instead, the public health machinery

was disbanded and the early warnings disregarded. In March 2020 it came to pass that Americans woke up house-bound in a broken country. As our social fabric frays further, in a crashing coda the Trump administration does nothing beyond protesting its election loss. As I write this, Trump golfs during a G20 economic meeting and yet won't relinquish the stage to others who could possibly help.

Zakaria concludes on the hopeful note that we still have our fate in our own hands, and it is yet to be determined. There is no end in sight, only a new chapter. The election of Joe Biden, and whatever happens after the COVID-19 vaccines will set a stage for a new act full of unpredictable plot twists, and the hijinks will continue. But it's hopeful that at least a few good minds see a positive pattern—maybe we can yet make something good come of this.

•
Jim Trammel is opening a new chapter himself, having retired from the work force. Next month, War and Peace. Or The Stand. Or Proust's Remembrance of Things Past. All seven volumes. Or all three. Time enough, at last.