

*House of Peace  
1 High Street  
Ipswich, MA 01938*



**2016**

*Hide those who have been driven out,  
do not let the refugee be seen.  
Let those who have been driven out stay with you;  
be their refuge  
against the destroyer.  
Once the oppression is over,  
and the destroyer is no more,  
and those now trampling the country underfoot  
have gone away,  
the throne will be made secure in gentleness,  
and on it there will sit in all fidelity,  
a judge careful for justice  
and eager for integrity.*

***Isaiah 16: 3-5***



## Winter Words from the House of Peace

*...I held an atlas in my lap  
ran my fingers across the whole world  
and whispered, "Where does it hurt?"  
It answered, "Everywhere...  
Everywhere....everywhere."*

Warsan Shire

In these times of unprecedented global catastrophe some are meant to carry the inner geography of this world as an imprint on their souls. This atlas in the heart does then whisper its places of pain --- the everywhere of human suffering. But who is truly listening? The internationally broadcast cries of helpless migrating millions all too soon have been nearly silenced by the voices of power calling for walls at the borders, security barriers, deportations, and other means of institutionalized distrust and oppression.

As the seas swallow thousands of fleeing refugees, the Turkish President warns, "What has drowned in the Mediterranean is not only the refugees. Our humanity has drowned in the Mediterranean Sea." And on land as a true ocean of terrified people flood European neighbors the map of human compassion delineates where safety will be offered, where survival might tenuously be possible, where mothers and children may shelter.

Another atlas of profligate wealth reveals a staggering panorama of immorality. Never have so few been allowed to hoard so much. 62 individuals in the world "own as much wealth as 3.5 billion humans in the bottom half." (Oxfam, Jan.2016) Never in our own Commonwealth of Massachusetts has the rich/poor divide been at the top of the national index. And never before have we heard a Governor declare that no war-fleeing Iraqis or Syrians shall be offered sanctuary in Massachusetts.

The House of Peace is a small and humble microcosm. Our guests from Iraq and Syria have, through torturous miraculous paths arrived at our sanctuary --- tiny droplets from the flood of millions, a prophetic infinity in a sad grain of sand.

Maybe our years carrying that geography of the Earth's places of despair in our "deep heart's core" have helped us listen to what is truly being asked here:

*"Let your love in community continue.*

*Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unaware."* ( St. Paul)

Yes, ours the privilege of beholding the angelic in the midst of the most extreme suffering: that of the war-wounded child. Ours the deep anguish of sharing daily reports from homes-that-are-no-more in Syria and Iraq, of bombings, loss and death. And ours the ever-pressing responsibility to witness always and everywhere to the powerful dignity, forces of loving hearts, and courageous strength of these ones who have lost all.

~Carrie Schuchardt, February 2016



*"Suffer not the children..."*

*I have come into the world to see this:  
the sword drop from men's hands  
even at the height of their arc of anger  
because we have finally  
realized there is just  
One  
flesh we can  
wound.*

*~Hafiz*

For some the realization the poet describes here is sudden, spontaneous, shattering. For others it is a slowly dawning truth. For all who meet and share their life with the children of the House of Peace the teaching is inescapable: innocence so often must bear the One wounded flesh.

In the fall of 2015 Safeh came to us from Syria with her ever-protective uncle who guards her every step. She was one whose home and town were bombed forcing a terror-filled flight to a refugee camp. Fire broke out in that camp and this tiny child, trapped in her tent, suffered unspeakable burns. A mighty team of helpers, guided by the Shriners in Germany, brought her safely to us where she spreads a light and beauty to all she meets. Her surgeries and treatments at the Shriners Hospital in Boston are extensive and hopeful. Safeh – our wise tiny wonder!

Traveling from Iraq, accompanied by her father, Abrar came next, also a burn victim receiving help at Shriners Hospital. She had come as a little child seven years ago when her injuries were critical. Now with the support of the Iraqi Children's Project she could return for much-needed follow-up surgery and treatment – all enthusiasm and joy.

Finally in early November Noor and her pregnant mother, also from Iraq, joined us. Through the generous help and commitment of the same Army officer who first met Noor as an infant struggling to survive a life-threatening birth defect attributed to the catastrophic toxins of depleted uranium, this 8 year old child is receiving urgently needed medical help at Mass. General Hospital. Noor radiates a child's beauty—and so does her infant brother, born January 31, and carefully now nestled into the House of Peace "nursery"!

The vibrant team that has formed around this precious group is inspiring: not only the medical personnel, and Shahin—focus person for them all—but a host of student volunteers, English tutors, story-tellers and musicians, craft teachers and knitting instructors, drivers, shoppers... a well of endless giving who themselves feel newly nourished. We are grateful for them all.



## *The Hand of Mary*

Beauty comes in so many forms, often surprising us with its evolution from what is seemingly withered or deformed. So it is with the mystery of Maryam's Flower.

Before her child was due to be born our Iraqi guest (here called "Fatima") showed me a dried, woody flower, about 3" in width, given to her by her mother. She instructed me that as labor begins I (her honored companion throughout) must place this dried flower into water, where it would slowly expand... This I did that early Saturday morning in the quiet room for birthing at Beverly Hospital. As her labor progressed so did this flower unfold revealing intricate leafy patterns.

Momentum built throughout a long and arduous labor until both Mother and her flower, which she called the Hand of Mary, had expanded in expectation of birth. "Fatima" then drank the water in which this now magnificent Maryam Mystery was floating.... Still more time would pass until Ahmad entered our world on Sunday morning January 31.

In his first precious moments it was my treasured privilege to bathe him in the sacred water. It was a kind of beautiful baptism in which the Hand of Mary touched the infant, with waters reminiscent of the tears of sorrow, tears of joy, wash over Ahmad's own land and people.

*May Maryam and her Flower ever protect  
the Mothers and their children of Iraq*



## On Celebrating our 25th Anniversary

*The House of Peace community had a special hope for its 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration. With all our heart we wanted our profound gratitude to sound forth to the countless friends and supporters of our work. We longed for the opportunity to come together in a festival of thanks for all those, known and unknown, near and far, on this side of the threshold and beyond who have joined their lives with ours in every way possible to share our task of healing. October 24 was set for a festive celebration.*

*So many people came, filling First Church in Ipswich: young and old, friend and stranger, new arrivals and former guests, volunteers and interns, peacemakers and veterans, family members and community members---all rejoicing in the Music of the Day.*

*The church that has so often welcomed us resounded with the songs of Rev. Rebecca Pugh and Pierce Woodward, Peter Stewart and Brayton Shanly, My Own Voice, and grandson Donovan Riley.*

*We prayed with Ven. Kato and Sr. Clare from the New England Peace Pagoda, and with Rev. Julia Polter, who offered a verse for our Joseph Jacques and Barbara Baker, and all House of Peace members on the other side. It was a heart-warming, unforgettably joyful day!*

*We offer here the Reflection from the House of Peace shared on this historic occasion.*

### A Reflection from the House of Peace



*“we shall confront the suffering of the earth and its  
displaced peoples with a thought of the heart  
manifested in community life...”*

*(Principles and Purposes of  
The House of Peace, 1990)*

In 1990 the House of Peace opened its doors to victims of war. The generous historic rooms of Roger's Manse (whose 290 year history includes shelter for the religiously persecuted and hospitality for those who would seek “A Great Awakening”) have received hundreds of guests in need of the healing streams of community life.

Now we are 25 years old, a significant milestone, we know. In 1990 the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child was being adopted internationally --- a new start for new generations. Now we look upon 25 years of our striving in a world of war-broken children and tragically displaced refugees and we ask: What of this “*thought of the heart*” which created our House of Peace, as a space attempting a fullness of moral values? In the face of violent decades of unfathomable pain, what of a small community daily struggling to heal the wounds of endless wars?

As uncounted and unknown civilians die in vast regions of abandonment, a constant stream of families and children have received shelter and protection, strength of community and warmth of love, here in Ipswich. Desperate parents, war disoriented children, veteran peace-makers, students, companions with special needs and special gifts, the dying and the soon to be born, have all formed our life, re-formed our vision, and blessed our every day and night.

How little we knew 25 years ago of the unfathomable abyss of suffering we would encounter--- and the infinity of compassion set free to heal. How little we knew of the soul cries of the motherless child and the childless mother, or of the stream of teachers of the universal language of love of enemies that alone can respond to the outcry. How little we knew of the night's torture of traumatized spirits, or of the force of a sanctuary that can bless those nights.

Our community of the House of Peace-- a thought of the heart---has been blessed by the accompaniment of a stream of selflessly generous friends who have responded to the wounds: for every sufferer driven from home, warm blankets, clothes, gifts have appeared; for every deprivation and hunger, nourishing food has been given; for every financial crisis, generous donations have been contributed; for every corner of house, barn and gardens, woods and hilltop sacred to the Agawam people, inspired helpers filled with enthusiasm have come; for every need of soul and heart, the love of friend and stranger has been shared.

Surrounded by the gentle wisdom and boundless warmth of our large, growing, often invisible community of volunteers, donors, supporters in every form, the House of Peace continues to collaborate and consecrate the substance of suffering towards the passage to healing. With deep trust in the future and boundless gratitude for the encouragement of friends near and far around Mother Earth, in companionship with all "wounded healers", our hearts break open in atonement for a century of violence and in hope for a great awakening to the promise of peace.

### *Founders*

It was a daring dive into a vast, unknown sea—that day in 1990 when we arrived at 1 High St. in Ipswich. In re-constructing, re-living, and reflecting on the adventures of our early years we realize over and again how much we relied upon the great strength and generosity, selflessness and creativity of our founding family with Carrie's three indomitable children at the heart of it all: Colum, Kieran and Ethna. Theirs was the task of forging a brotherhood and sisterhood with refugee children from war-ravaged countries. These bonds endure even now and we rejoice in the unfolding of their lives and their own families. We thank them with unspeakable gratitude for all they have given in so many ways to this beloved House of Peace.



Grandson  
Donovan

Christianna  
& Kieran

Ethna & Ver-Nard  
Grandson Nico Ajani

Colum  
& his bride YouLee

Grandson Mason

on a glorious August 15 wedding day!

## *The Community at Large*

*...Something altogether new must fill our souls in order that we may undertake the tasks which can lead humanity out of violence into a new civilization.*

*Rudolf Steiner, 1920*

These words sounded into the past year with increased urgency and renewed hope. Truly, in a very joyful way, our souls were “filled with something new” as beautiful grandson Nico Ajani Fernandes entered the world on August 5, 2015. Parents Ethna and Ver-Nard teach us daily how to enjoy the miracles of life!

Soon after, the House of Peace celebrated the Marriage of son, Colum Riley, to YouLee Kim, receiving Grandson Mason even more deeply into our community life. Though they live in California their hearts are close to us here in Ipswich.

And still more weddings to come!

Son, Kieran, will marry Christianna Abel in June... and Ethna and Ver-Nard will celebrate their wedding in August. Also in summer we'll share the marriage of House of Peace alumni Michael Mansur (former intern) with Shamim, former long-term guest with her wonderful son, Shawn.

But other family members in 2015 moved far away. Dr. Sadeed Jawad and his wife, Luma, and three children have established their life in Spokane, WA where Sadeed is engaged in a four-year medical residency. Such a bittersweet farewell to such a beloved family which always stays close to us all... In late July, we happily welcomed a new friend and resident, Nick Cipollone, who quickly became an integral part of our life... By autumn the house became very full with the arrival of our six Middle Eastern guests from Iraq and Syria, with baby Ahmad completing that circle with his birth on January 31, 2015... In the midst of it all, conferences were attended; lectures were given and received; collaboration intensified with colleagues serving refugees and living in community with friends with some disabilities. There were peace talks and peace walks, concerts, artistic events and festivals unfolding in rapid succession, bringing scores of people to our door and sending us out far and wide... The regular rhythm of our Study Group and other regular events at the Waldorf School, our meetings of North Shore Coalition for Peace and Justice & Veterans for Peace, the visits of youth groups, and a variety of individual guests filled the recent weeks and months, sharpening our vision for serving needs and sharing resources on into the future.



*These Strangers, in a foreign World, Protection asked of me—*

*Befriend them, lest yourself in Heaven be found a Refugee. ~Emily Dickinson*

## ***In Memoriam***

*When a spirit dies, a human being is born.*

*When a human being dies, a spirit is born.*

We stand always in wonder and awe before the portals of Birth and Death. The more we outwardly work toward healing the wounds of so many broken lives, the more we inwardly kneel before the Gates that open at each Birth and Death. We hold in our arms with speechless joy the tiny newborns who have blessed our lives these past months. And we hold in our hearts with quiet sadness and grateful accompaniment the precious elders who have crossed over after blessing our lives for so many years.

Colleagues in Camphill, partners in peace-making, family members, friends, souls known and unknown: We embrace this community with our love, prayer, and ever-growing awareness of their “strong power in spirit regions.” The voice of each resounds:

***I am not on the earth as soul  
but only in water, air, and fire;***

***In my fire I am in the planets  
and the sun.***

***In my sun-being I am the  
sky of the fixed stars---***

***I am not on the earth as soul  
but in Light, Word, and Life.***

***In my life I am within  
the being of the sun and the planets,  
in the Spirit of Wisdom.***

***In my wisdom being I am in the  
Spirit of Love.***

***~Rudolf Steiner***

---

In this festive year of a Silver Celebration supporters and helpers of all kinds have surrounded the House of Peace with generosity, hard work, and faithful friendship. In the midst of our great and often urgent need this accompaniment is our saving joy. We are deeply grateful.

Enclosed is my gift for the House of Peace:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

**978-356-9395    1 High Street, Ipswich, Massachusetts 01938    thehouseofpeace@yahoo.com**  
*House of Peace, Inc. is a therapeutic community serving victims of war, in companionship with adults with disabilities, and offering education for peace and moral awakening, incorporated in Massachusetts in 1990 as a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt charitable and educational corporation, supported by voluntary contributions.*