



## PC and Ruach Shalom: Circles of Peace

*When Richard Gere arrived in the Arab Israeli village of Furadis, some 120 women were there to greet him. Standing in the middle of a circle of these women, comprising activists from many women's organizations and some women from the PC-Northern Israel circle, who had gathered for the daylong retreat, Mr. Gere sounded a Buddhist chime that brought complete silence to the group.*



*Special guest Richard Gere lends his support to a new Arab women's Peacemaker Circle in Furadis.*

After Mr. Gere's departure, a new circle of women formed and agreed to meet regularly as a women's Peacemaker Circle. This circle empowers Arab women by offering them an opportunity to find their voice and place in traditional Arab villages, and it empowers and informs Jewish women who have never visited an Arab village.

We have been asked by a consortium of 150 Israeli Arab-Jewish coexistence groups to help them integrate Peacemaker Circles into their work. Efforts to form new circles comprised only of youth are also underway, led by Rami Mahamid, a young Arab-Palestinian Israeli. Christian Arab leader Elias Jabour has stated that he would like to see a Peacemaker Circle in every Arab village.

Furadis is also the site of the new Internet café, a cooperative venture between Guy Foran, an Israeli businessman and peace activist from the Tel Aviv

circle, and Rami Mahmoud, a guide for youth in Israel. This collaboration reflects the power of interlocking circles. The café will train young people in computers.

The connection between Peacemaker Circles and Ruach Shalom began during Bernie Glassman and Eve Marko's visit to Jerusalem in 2001. The first circles in Israel met in January 2003, when Bernie Glassman, Eve Marko and other staff of Peacemaker Circles' global hub and European office gave an experiential workshop on circles. Fifty participants representing some 15 organizations attended. Attendees wanted to join Peacemaker Circles to explore and understand more, and to be part of circle developments in Israel. Participants branched out to form new circles. New organizations got involved. Now, established circles meet regularly in Jerusalem and north Israel. Local circles will have representation in a national circle, and this circle will have representation at the global level.

Circles are facilitated through Ruach Shalom, an organization formed to support peace and reconciliation in Israel, and to heal the divides among its various ethnic, religious and cultural groups. Ruach Shalom in Arabic is Ruh al-Salaam, meaning The Spirit of Peace. Ruach Shalom founders, like PC circle coordinator Ibtisam Mahamid, are representatives of some

—continued on page 7

## Efforts in Poland Promote Non-Violent Communication

Andrzej Krajewski's initial contact with Bernie Glassman came in their organizing of the first annual Auschwitz retreat in 1995. The director of *Wspólnota Pokoju* (Peacemaker Community-Poland), Mr. Krajewski has since been engaged with PC-Poland and Auschwitz-Birkenau survivors in creation of the Hospice-Memorial for the City of Oswiecim (Auschwitz). PC-Poland has also led lively and challenging discussions concerning Polish-Jewish history and reconciliation.

PC-Poland's main work has been focused on breaking through entrenched social attitudes and mistrust of social institutions, especially among youth, enculturated in Polish citizens after hundreds of years of successive military occupations. One tool that PC-Poland has successfully used is non-violent communication.

PC-Poland has twice organized well-attended talks by Marshall Rosenberg on non-violent communication, most recently on January 15, 2003, at the Warsaw College of Social Psychology. These lectures were followed up with workshops. Other non-violent communications trainings and workshops have focused on teachers and NGOs (non-government organizations).

PC-Poland's goal is to have non-violent communications as part of the curriculums in Polish high schools. Other educational activities include Hospice training and prison projects offering music and sitting meditations, and nonviolent communications for staff. PC-Poland hopes to establish non-violent communications training centers by 2004.

After weeklong meetings with PCI European director Frank DeWaele in

April, focused on circle development and implementing circle processes, Mr. Krajewski and PC-Poland held a public (24-person) workshop which introduced the concepts of circles. In May, 2003, Bernie Glassman met with PC country directors and coordinators in Europe and proposed they develop interlocking circles with PCI. After meeting with Mr. Krajewski, PC-Poland decided to move forward on this path.

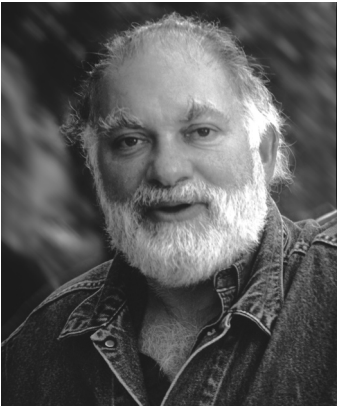
Mr. Krajewski and PC-Poland circle developer Janek Golebowski attended the Circle Development Training at PCI's House of One People Campus in June (funds to bring PC-Poland circle developers to the training were provided by Christine Jersewski from Poland). PC-Poland intends to introduce the circle architecture into existing groups in Poland that are already oriented along the circle model.

***“Women bring children and life  
to the land, so we can make and  
give peace as well.”***

— see page 4.



# From the Desk of Bernie Glassman



Dear Friends,

I write you on the eve of another departure to the Middle East, this time to Jordan and Israel. Much of our attention and energy has recently focused on this part of the world. With the assistance and support of our friend, Richard Gere, we are opening a hub in Amman to support the development of peacemaker circles in Palestine (known as the Palestinian Authority in Israel) and Jordan. We hope to expand this work to other Arab countries in 2004. Richard is just one partner in this work; we are identifying and talking to others, too. We will then go to Israel to launch circle projects there.

As of May 1, we officially became Peacemaker Circle International in place of Peacemaker Community. This was the culmination of a long process by staff of honing and clarifying our vision and mission. My dream is to build an “Internet” of social activists all over the world who are linked to each other and can access information, support, and resources, not just through on-line technology but also through a system of representation that connects them.

The basic element of this net of global activists is the peacemaker circle. Individuals and organizations come together in peacemaker circles, and with the support of a trained coordinator, create their respective mission and work plan that calls for collaborations and joint efforts. Peacemaker Circle International, based here in Montague, Massachusetts, trains those coordinators and develops new hubs for supporting that work in various countries, such as Jordan.

The science of social networks is only five years old and is already gaining prominence through such books as *Linked* and *Nexus*, but the not-for-profit sector has been the last to recognize opportunities that lie in connections and linkages. I believe that here at PCI we’re not just building networks, but a self-governing, self-awakening structure that will generate new ideas for social transformation that we can’t begin to imagine or guess at. As it comes together, it points to our interdependence and interconnectedness, which are the things I’ve been teaching all my life.

Your continued support, financial and otherwise, remains vital to our success. We hope that you received a recent mailing from Bud Delphin, Peacemaker Circle Foundation’s new Executive Director, describing important PCI initiatives in the Middle East. Please give what you can, and let us know of others who would like to receive information about our work.

I look forward to sharing this news with you. Thank you for your support.

Love, 

## Bearing Witness

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**Thank you for your support!**

## Peacemaker Name Change

Peacemaker Circle International is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) corporation with headquarters in Montague, Massachusetts. *Peacemaker Community* changed its name to *Peacemaker Circle International* to reflect a greater honing of vision and purpose.

## Bearing Witness Retreat 2003 at Auschwitz-Birkenau

For seven consecutive years, Bernie Glassman has traveled to Auschwitz-Birkenau to support the annual Bearing Witness retreat. This year, things will be different. Seizing the reins and assuming full control of the event will be peacemakers from PC-Poland.

Hosted by *Wspólnota Pokoju* (Peacemaker Community-Poland) under director Andrzej Krajewski, the 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Bearing Witness retreat will be held at Auschwitz-Birkenau from November 3-7, 2003.

“I want people to support the Auschwitz retreat, even though I am not going to be there,” says Mr. Glassman. “I have a full schedule, with our work in the Middle East, but I also know that unless I step back from the event people will not honor the transition and the important role of PC-Poland. I want it to be very clear that it is run by Andrzej Krajewski.”

This is an annual event of the Peacemaker Circles community, a multi-faith network of people and organizations practicing a vision of peace and social action. Participants will gather at Auschwitz-Birkenau as an interfaith assembly of Muslims, Jews, Hindus, Christians and Buddhists.

*Support our peacemaking efforts around the world! There are many different levels of giving, from Partners in Peace at \$10,000 or more, to Companions in Peace at \$1000 and above, to Friends in Peace beginning at \$25, each with its own benefit package like naming opportunities, invitations to trainings and educational programs. All receive newsletters, special mailings and updates.*

## Partners, from page 1

organizations active in efforts for peaceful coexistence in Israel, but the structure of interlocking circles is new for Ruach Shalom. For now Ruach Shalom is the organization representing Peacemaker Circles in Israel.

The PC-Northern Israel circle is composed of Jews and Arabs, women and men. Discussions within the PC-Northern Israel circle have focused on the dilemma between pursuing dialog as an action in and of itself, or pursuing social action benefiting everyone.

The PC-Jerusalem circle formed in March 2003, when Michal Fox, Peacemaker Circle’s Director of Circle Development in Israel, began working with Ruach Shalom founder Elayahu McLean. Ms. Fox has attended two circle development trainings at PCI’s global hub in Massachusetts, the most recent in June 2003. Ms. Fox led a five-day training in Israel in March, and

## Bearing Witness Around the World

“Auschwitz always raises the issue of how we human beings deal with our differences,” Mr. Glassman reminds us.

The retreat will be guided by spirit-holders representing various religious traditions. Daylight hours will be spent at Birkenau in meditation, chanting names of the dead, memorial (Kaddish) and other religious services. In the mornings there will be facilitated small group councils and in the evenings special programs. Arriving in Krakow, the ancient capitol of Poland, prior to the retreat, offers participants a fresh and alluring cultural perspective.

Those who cannot participate in the retreat can contribute funds for a memorial candle honoring one who perished in the Holocaust; the funds will be used for scholarships for future participants.

Andrzej Krajewski is also working together with Catholic Israeli Arab Fr. Emile Shufani to bring Israeli Jews and Arabs to Auschwitz in 2003.

For further information, archives and a photo essay, contact our web site at:

[www.peacemakercircle.org](http://www.peacemakercircle.org).

## Peacemaker Community in Ireland

Peacemaker Community work in Belfast began in July 2000 with a powerful Bearing Witness retreat attended by opposing political and religious factions of the perpetual war that has claimed lives on all sides. The past three years have seen continuous efforts in meditation and peacemaking (establishing

dialog; meeting with and listening to all sides) unfold both in Belfast and Larne. Numerous organizations, institutions and faiths are involved. Frank Liddy, Peacemaker Community coordinator, and Michael O’Keefe, Zen peacemaker and disciple of Bernie Glassman, are working with ex-prisoner groups. The Black Mountain Mindfulness Center was established in Belfast to teach meditation and council training to interested parties. With a board comprised of both Nationalists and Loyalists, and four sitting groups, the Center is currently awaiting charitable status. Other efforts are also underway. However, as Mr. O’Keefe notes, “The risks of entering into situations in places as volatile as [Belfast and Larne] are immense.”

## Home Street Home Debuts

On Saturday, May 17, 2003, the Buddhist Television Network in Amsterdam, Holland premiered the new film about Bernie Glassman and his work, *Home Street Home*. Showing the importance of being open and bearing witness to the experience and needs of others, and the importance of taking meaningful actions growing out of that witnessing, the film focuses on Mr. Glassman’s work in the Greyston Community, his street retreats, and the bearing witness retreats at Auschwitz. Produced by Babeth Van Loo, the film will be shown at the first International Buddhist Film Festival (IBFF) at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art this November 20<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup>. It is also being scheduled for other film festivals, including New York.

she will hold two circle coordinator trainings in Israel in 2003, where some 20-25 circle coordinators will be trained.

The Jerusalem circle has focused on understanding circle processes, developing a PC-Jerusalem circle vision for Jerusalem, and implementing social action projects. Circle coordinator Elayahu McLean is working with Hagit Lifshitz, a circle coordinator trained in circle development at the House of One People in June 2003. Professor Yakov Raz has coordinated members of Ruach Shalom (PC-Israel) in beginning to develop a Peace Leadership School in Israel.

“There is a lot of spiritual energy in the Jerusalem circle,” says Michal Fox, “The Jerusalem circle has been exploring the circle architecture and working to understand the three tenets. I think this will be a beautiful base for helping and supporting the project of healing Jerusalem in 2004.”



Peacemaker Profile

Bud Delphin

Ellis “Bud” Delphin is a warm and affable man (certain to try to stop us from celebrating his humanity in this newsletter). Bud’s two daughters are now in college, he lives with his wife, Lanie, and they are very attached to their dog, Teddy. As Administrative Director of Peacemaker Circle International and Executive Director of Peacemaker Circle Foundation, Bud is charged with performing financial and strategic miracles. He hopes that his efforts will result in greater peace and understanding in the world.

A dedicated volunteer with the Tri-county Youth Programs and Pioneer Valley Business Alliance for Local Living Economies, Bud gives selflessly to benefit others. He comes with years of experience as former Dean of Residential Life at Northfield Mount Herman School in Northfield, MA. Coming from The Arbors, an assisted living community in Amherst, MA, where Bud was Executive Director (1998-2003), Bud brings with him his irascible propensity to break out in song and dance, shuffling his feet and swinging his arms. “There is something very exciting and deeply moving about working for an organization that is doing peacemaker work from a spiritual place,” Bud says.



The HOOP: A Synthesis of Old and New

The beams in the old barn came from some mammoth trees. They are eight-inch square, contiguous 45-foot spans of solid chestnut carved and shaped by hand in the late 1700’s. These beams exemplify the architectural details retained and exposed during the transformation that is taking the old farmhouse barn to the new House of One People (HOOP). The weather beaten boards, the wide plank floors and the beautiful beams and pillars of the old barn survived the metamorphosis to grace the newly unfolding House of One People with an elemental simplicity.

The chestnut beams span the main hall, a 2025 square foot space with almost a 45-foot ceiling at its

peak. This hall is the embodiment of peace, and a space where spiritual practice and social action are honored and integrated. Other features of the House of One People under development include conference spaces, an upper mezzanine, sunny meeting rooms, passageways and sacred spaces.

Construction on the House of One People began as the last vestiges of a long, hard, snowy winter melted away in April. Heavy and incessant rain notwithstanding, the new foundation was poured, the barn gutted, the preliminary architectural modifications completed. The centerpiece of the 34-acre Montague campus and the global hub for Peacemaker Circle, the House of One People is rapidly assuming its new form as a contemporary center for Peacemaker offices, sacred gatherings, multi-faith activities and circle development. This is the primary space where Peacemaker Circle will provide programming for campus events; hold conferences and workshops; facilitate all aspects of developing and linking Peacemaker Circles.

Major developments of the greater campus are also underway. There is a new road cut through the property and the new artesian well has been drilled. Developments are underway for the sustainable agriculture program, a collaborative effort between Peacemaker Circle International, the Five-College System of the Pioneer Valley, and the greater local community.



Sunlight filters through the exposed beams of the House of One People at the PCI Global Hub in Montague, Massachusetts. Photo by Bruce O’Leary.

PC Begins Work in Jordan

On Middle East Initiative

In January 2003, Dr. Daoud Kuttab first pressed the issue of a central organizing hub for circle development dedicated to supporting the Palestine Authority and Jordan. Meeting with Bernie Glassman and Eve Marko in Ramallah and East Jerusalem, Dr. Kuttab stressed the need for geographical neutrality and independence. The Amman office is now a reality.

Plans for an office located in Amman, Jordan, were finalized during the June PCI mission to Israel and the West Bank. Seed money to organize the effort was provided by Richard Gere, who also participated in June discussions with Dr Kuttab, Sheikh Ali Birani, religious and civil society, and other Arab leaders.

The Peacemaker Circles office (PC-Amman) will initially focus exclusively on providing the core support for circle

developers in the Palestine Authority. The program will eventually expand to other Middle Eastern countries, beginning with Egypt. Driving this Peacemaker Circles initiative is the imperative of bringing disparate voices together in the common realization of peace.

The Palestine-Jordan hub is linked to the House of One People campus through the new Peacemaker Circle International coordinator for Palestine and Jordan, Dr. Mohamed Elgadi. It will be staffed by professionals filling technical, financial, organizational and managerial roles.

“Bringing diverse voices together from Pallestine and Jordan is a major step in realizing Peacemaker Circles’ vision in the Middle East,” says PCI’s Teiju Corbett, “and Dr. Elgadi will play an important role in this.” Having joined PCI staff and traveled with the Middle East contingent in June, Dr.



Mohamed Elgadi is the new PCI coordinator for Palestine and Jordan. Photo by Ginni Stern.

Elgadi later completed the three-week PCI Circle Development Training at the House of One People, his base of operations.

Working with Bernie Glassman and Eve Marko, Dr. Elgadi began setting up the PC-Amman office on July 11, 2003. Joined by Dr. Daoud Kuttab on July 12, they began siting and staffing the PC-Amman office.

In August, PC-Amman staff will train Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza, and Jordanians, to be circle coordinators, with participants representing a broad range of spiritually based social action organizations and perspectives.

New Director Named For PCI’s Amman Hub

PCI is pleased to announce the opening of the Amman, Jordan hub office and the hiring of Executive Director Fadi Al-Qadi. A Jordanian and resident of Amman, Mr. Al-Qadi brings to PCI his extensive knowledge of the Middle East and the Arab world, and years of experience with Arab-based media and journalist organizations.

As Cofounder and Executive Director of the non-profit Center for Defending Freedom of Journalists (CDFJ), he worked to provide technical support and protection to Jordanian journalists and other practicing media in the country. Mr. Al-Qadi’s electronic media experience will be invaluable to maintaining electronic links to PC-Amman. He has served as editor, writer,

media advisor, or consultant for numerous electronic publications including: Crimes of War, a public awareness book detailing war laws and their just application; the Arabic edition of Eurasianet.org, a specialized resource analyzing regional affairs in Asia and the Middle East; Ammannet.net, a web-based radio program providing regional news coverage and information on developing social and economic issues.

Mr. Al-Qadi’s experience and knowledge of the Middle East have already proved vital to the development of Peacemaker Circles there. He is now collaborating with PCI-Montague to bring the Peacemaker Circle model to the region. In the months ahead, Mr. Al-Qadi will work with PCI staff to identify and hire circle coordinators and office personnel for the Amman hub.

Healing Jerusalem—October 2004

Explorations are underway toward holding a multimedia event in Jerusalem featuring the world’s greatest artists in the visual, written and performing arts. Richard Gere met with Palestinian legislator Hanan Ashrawi in Ramallah to discuss the possibility of an international peace event The intention is to use the creative energy of the arts in an event or series of events that will catalyze the transformation of the city of Jerusalem.

The vision for the event will be created by a small group of major artists. With extensive media and Internet coverage, it will culminate with one giant media concert with the Dalai Lama and other spiritual and political leaders in attendance. October 2004 has been tentatively set as the date for this event.



# Gere Bears Witness in The Middle East

In June 2003, American actor and Buddhist disciple Richard Gere met with Arab and Jewish women in the Arab town of Furadis, near Haifa, Israel. The women are involved in circle work with Peacemaker Circle-Israel’s Ruach Shalom/Ruh al-Salaam (Spirit of Peace) trainers.

“He asked us to be his teachers for this day,” said Randa Zriek, a Palestinian, Arab, Israeli, Christian woman and Peacemaker Circle organizer in Israel. “He wanted to hear from us about our suffering, our happiness, and our hopes for the future. Women bring children and life to the land, so we can make and give peace as well.”

Furadis marked the first of Mr. Gere’s three-day interfaith tour to gather information on furthering peace between Israel and Palestine. Stressing the importance of religious leadership in building peace, Mr. Gere met with prominent religious and business leaders, artists and rights groups, and members of Peacemaker Circles in Israel and the West Bank.

In Dalyat al-Karmal, Mr. Gere talked about peace with Jewish rabbis; the Mayor; Jewish and Arab members of the Israeli parliament; Suni and other religious leaders. Dalyat al-Karmal is a large village of people of diverse faiths.

Mr. Gere’s visit to the Middle East arose after Bernie Glassman and Eve Marko returned from Palestine in April. Expressing his compassion for all the victims of the conflict, Mr. Gere wanted to be involved. Peacemaker Circle’s Middle East circle directors and affiliates organized the tour.

Joined by Bernie Glassman, Eve Marko and Dr. Mohamed Elgadi, PCI’s new Middle East Coordinator, Mr. Gere traveled unofficially through the Qalandia checkpoint, between Jerusalem and the West Bank city of Ramallah. Mr. Gere’s courage and commitment in going to Ramallah while it remained under total military occupation and curfew was lauded, especially by Palestinians. Mr. Gere’s journey underscored his commitment to an equitable settlement, and it brought fresh hope to the West Bank.

Mr. Gere toured Ramallah and the destroyed headquarters of Palestinian leader Yassar Arafat. He also met with prominent Palestinians, including Zeyad Abu Amer (Minister of Culture), Salha Abu Gwad, Dr. Daoud Kuttub and Dr. Hanan Ashrawi. Mr. Gere’s vision of a strong role for world artists in peacemaking between Arabs and Jews found strong support in Ramallah, especially from Dr. Ashrawi.

Mr. Gere later met with Dr. Siri Nassiba, Jamal Ghosheh, Palestine National Theatre director, and other prominent Palestinians in East Jerusalem. During his Middle East stay, Mr. Gere committed seed money, contingent on PCI securing matching gifts elsewhere, to begin organizing and supporting an Arab and Palestinian PCI hub in Amman, Jordan. Meetings throughout the three-day tour were attended by prominent Israelis, including Rani Rahav, Shimon Peres, Meir Shitrit, David Grossman, Sherry Arison, Nohi Dankner, Yossi Beilene and Ami Aylon.

“Mr. Gere’s visit created a tremendous energy for healing,” says Iris Elhanani, Executive Director of Ruach Shalom. “He is very popular in Israel, not only as a Hollywood star, but also for his Tibetan work. He came to learn and we tried to take him full circle, to hear the many voices, to meet all kinds of people in Israel. Everywhere he went he created this energy of partnership. He said, ‘I’m looking for partners who want to make a change.’”



An Israeli Arab from Furadis cradles his two hopes for the future: his daughter, and an olive branch. Photo by Mohamed Elgadi.



Richard Gere’s recent visit to the Middle East brought excitement, joy and hope to people of diverse histories, offering the prospect of healing and peace.

# Circle Development Introduces Core Concepts to Global Trainers

“It was a stretch to wrap my mind around the concept of Indra’s Net,” says Ginni Stern, commenting on the recent Circle Development Training. “And when I understood it – to imagine a world-wide network of spiritually-based people and organizations working together toward peace -- it blew my mind.”

Ms. Stern was one of fourteen people who participated in the Circle Development Training at the House of One People (HOOP) campus in Montague, Massachusetts. Participants from Poland, Italy, Mexico, New England and the Middle East united in June for a three-week immersion program sponsored by Peacemaker Circle Foundation. This was the second two-week circle development training held at the HOOP campus.

“The training is to help people learn about the Peacemaker Circles model of interlocking circles”, says Teiju Corbett, Executive Director for Training and Development at Peacemaker Circle International, “to learn about the tools and processes we use in a circle, to invite voices in, to create diversity and understand the architecture of the circle.”

Attendees study and define the key roles of coordinator, seat-holder, storyteller, facilitator and recorder. They learn about tools like the voting process, listening circle and brainstorming. Paramount is the incorporation of the five energies (resources, spirituality, action, training and integration) in all discussions or activities that arise. The mandala of the five energies offers a system of working to incorporate the fullness of life that doesn’t leave out any pieces.

“Participants are really coming to study facilitation toward action,” Ms. Corbett adds. “How do circle members begin to hear each other and the diverse points of view? How do members come to collective action within the circle? How does the circle connect with other circles to achieve collective action? And how does a circle support individual members and their individual projects?”

The three-week immersion at the HOOP campus offered participants the opportunity to focus intensely. Small group collaborations, workshops, skills development were all included. Circle coordinators developed action plans for their own countries and issues, for example, and these plans were shared with, and critiqued by, the circle.

Bernie Glassman shared his insights with the training circle, and PCI invited other experts for one-day seminars to share ideas and speak about the successes of their organizations. Lois Barber shared her extensive knowledge of organizing and international cooperation based on her work as International Coordinator of EarthAction and founder and President of US citizen action network 20/20 Vision. Paula Green shared her knowledge in conflict transformation and communal dialog gained as founder and Director of the Karuna Center for Peacebuilding.

The training identified three PCI staff that are ready to begin teaching others. Amina al-Jerrahi, Frank De Waele and Michal Fox were certified to train others in circle development, and have added trainings to their circle organizing work in Mexico and Europe.



Peacemakers from around the world gathered in June to explore the power of the circle and its architecture. Photo by Eddie Diemand.

All evil karma ever committed  
by me since of old,  
on account of my  
beginningless greed,  
anger and ignorance,  
born of my body, mouth and  
consciousness,  
now I atone for it all.

Verse of Atonement—  
Zen Peacemaker Order