

Public Lectures on Peace-Theology and -Ethics 2023

WARS FOR RESOURCES & GOOD PRACTICES FOR JUST PEACE

Format: Hybrid (presence & zoom participation)

Locations: VU / Mennonite Congregations of Haarlem, Utrecht, Zaandam

Link: <https://www.religionpeacejustice.com/public-lectures>

Dates: Tuesdays & Thursdays, see dates and times below.

In Europe, the war in Ukraine is experienced as a “wake-up-call” to re-visit political, strategic, and ethical views on security and peace. This war seems to be a relapse into old patterns of war, colonialism and the struggle for territory – leading back to hostile nationalisms and re-militarization on all sides.

Yet basically, most wars have been and will always be fought over access to resources, especially by societies whose guiding interest is economics. In times of global crises, this struggle is likely to intensify considerably, because access to drinking water and food is already not guaranteed for all. The most vulnerable are already effected severely. And human-made global warming and rapidly advancing climate change are further depleting vital resources, so that a world population of more than 8 billion people will barely have what they need to live.

Thus, these growing conflicts are no longer only about nation-state and economic power interests, but simply about the survival of entire populations. Growing ‘re-settlements’ and refugee movements are probably only a foretaste of the crises facing the world community as a whole in near future.

In this series of public lectures, we want to analyze and discuss together different scenarios, looking from different disciplines and world regions at “wars for resources”, searching to discover interdependencies. In addition, we aim to include “good practices” for contributing to a sustainable just peace – for all.

The guiding question is: Which good practices do we discover in order to transform a development, that will potentially lead to a rising number of violent conflicts – also in privileged spaces that until recently seemed to be rather “safe”?

Lectures

It is possible to join all lectures online.

23. March 2023 **The War in Ukraine – Postcolonial and Ecumenical Perspectives**
Prof. Dr. Fernando Enns & Dr. Andrés Pacheco Lozano
 Vrije Universiteit: Filmzaal PThU (15:30-17:00hr)
 Adress: De Boelelaan 1105, 1081 HV Amsterdam

The war in Ukraine is an ethical challenge in many regards. Christian churches are involved on both sides, supporting the fight of their nation states. It is a war over territories, peoples, narratives, and resources, following nationalistic and imperial mind-sets. In this lecture we will introduce postcolonial analysis to dismantle the motivations. And we will look critically at the theological-ethical reasoning within the World Council of Churches, followed by discussions on possible alternative ways of intervention.

Fernando Enns holds the chair for (Peace-) Theology and Ethics at the Faculty of Religion and Theology, VU Amsterdam. He is also the director of the Amsterdam Centre for Religion and Peace & Justice Studies, and the director of the Center for Peace Church Theology at the University of Hamburg.

Andrés Pacheco Lozano, born in Colombia, living in The Netherlands, is a Post-Doc Researcher at the Amsterdam Center for Religion, Peace and Justice Studies/Mennonite Seminary, Research Assistant of the chair of (Peace-) Theology and Ethics at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

28. March 2023 **The Land as a Mirror: Environmental Justice from an African Perspective**
Prof. Dr. Michael Eze
 Vrije Universiteit: Filmzaal PThU (15:30-17:00hr)
 Adress: De Boelelaan 1105, 1081 HV Amsterdam

In many African traditions, the land is highly revered as the source of life, meaning and prospects for good living. On this view, the relationship between people and the land is not just material, but totality of existence (politics, culture, religion, economy) often portrayed by interdependence and co-existence. Drawing on this Africanist perspective this reflection will show ways in which the land is both a mirror and aftermath of any holistic vision of environmental justice. The idea of justice here is not just a reference to regulative ideals affecting us humans, but an expanded notion that includes all of environment – plants, animals, spirits, the living, unborn and the living-dead. The ultimate lesson from this Africanist view of environmental justice is the contemporaneity of values that harmonizes and not discriminate any aspect of environmental care as superior to the other. For example, in some instances, vegetarianism is necessary to care for the land, in other instances, where plants constitute spiritual forms of identity, other values take precedence.

Michael Eze teaches Global and Comparative Philosophy at Leiden University. Formerly visiting scholar at the Center for African Studies at Stanford University, research associate at the Martin Luther King Jr., Research and Education Institute, Stanford University. He was a Stiftung Mercator Foundation Research Fellow at the Kulturwissenschaftliches Institut (Institute for Advanced Study in Humanities) in Essen, Germany from 2006-2009. He has a Ph.D. in Political Science and International Studies from Cambridge University and a second Ph.D. (Summa Cum Laude) in History and Cultural Reflection from Universität Witten-Herdecke, Germany. MA in philosophy from the University of Pretoria, South Africa, and BA Honours in philosophy and Religious Studies from the Jesuit School of Philosophy, in Harare, Zimbabwe in association

with the University of Zimbabwe. He has published books, articles and public essays in areas of philosophy, politics, and the history of human reconciliation and dialogue.

4. April 2023 **The War in Ukraine: An Emergency Call of a Sustainable Future**
José Antonio Parcha Barrueta
 Doopsgezinde Kerk Zaandam (19:00-20:30hr)
 Adress: Westzijde 82, 1506 EH Zaandam

After the war in Ukraine, the prices of energy and food have risen exponentially, causing an increase in the number of food insecure people in the world, especially in the most vulnerable countries. This war represents an emergency call for a transformation of the energy and agri-food sector which is unsustainably and responsible for conflicts and setbacks in global food security.

José Antonio Parcha is a student of Sociology, International Relations and Expert in Development at Complutense University in Madrid. He did an internship at the Spanish Representation at FAO, IFAD and WFP. There, he has focused on agri-food sustainability and the effects of the war in Ukraine on the global food system. He has recently started to write a thesis about the responsibility of financial speculation on the global food crisis.

18. April 2023 **A Call for an Ecumenical Dialogue on a Just Peace: The challenges for the Interkerkelijke Vredesberaad (IKV), Inter-Church Peacecouncil, in the Netherlands**
Rev. Margarithhe Veen and Prof. Dr. Ad van der Helm
 Doopsgezinde Kerk Utrecht (19:00-20:30hr)
 Adress: Oudegracht 270, 3511 NV Utrecht

In this lecture Ad van der Helm and Margarithhe Veen will explain their vision on a just peace. They will set out their thoughts about the challenges for an ecumenical attention for peace-work in the Netherlands. They will explain how they expect that this concept can contribute to a more balanced society than a polarised one

Ad van der Helm is a catholic priest of the diocese of Rotterdam. He studied Theology in Amsterdam and canon law in Strasbourg, Fr (PhD). Currently he is president of The Hague Community of Churches and President of IKV. He is also a professor in canon law at KU Leuven, and a Belgium Parish priest in Zoetermeer.

Margarithe Veen is a Board member of the Inter-Church Peace Council in the Netherlands and pastor for the Mennonite parishes Zaanstreek and Krommenie.

20. April 2023

Church, Climate Crisis, and Conflict: How Churches Can and Must Work for Change

Geke van Vliet, PhD Candidate

Doopgezinde Kerk Zaandam (19:00-20:30hr)

Adress: Westzijde 82, 1506 EH Zaandam

The war in Ukraine has not only affected those living in the direct war zone. With Ukraine being one of the main suppliers of grain worldwide, and with Russia being one of the main gas suppliers worldwide, the consequences of the war can be felt even in the Netherlands, South Africa, and many more places globally. The war causes food shortages, high food prices, and high energy prices, among other things. More and more conflicts will arise, as the climate crisis puts pressure on the world. The most vulnerable people are on the run from 'natural' disasters, fighting for access to food and drinking water, while world powers are violently trying to obtain resources. How can churches respond to the expected growth of conflicts and the, already existing, threat of the climate crisis?

Geke van Vliet (1993) obtained her research master's and Mennonite master's of divinity at the Vrije Universiteit in Amsterdam. During these studies, she has focussed on eco-theology, (green) churches, and the climate crisis. She has recently started as a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Pretoria, South Africa as a member of a research project within the International Network on Religious Communities and Sustainable Development (IN//RCSD, see <https://in-rcsd.org/en/sagras>). In her Ph.D. research, she focuses on the ecological commitment of young Christians in South Africa and Germany in the search for a much-needed socio-ecological transformation.

9. May 2023

Pastoral, Prophetic and Practical - Pacific Spirituality and Political Engagement

Rev. James Bhagwan

Doopsgezinde Kerk Haarlem (17:00-18:30hr)

Adress: Frankestraat 24, 2011 HV Haarlem

The call for a completely different approach to development than the current and unsustainable model is not a radical issue for Pacific Islanders. It is in fact in harmony to the ecologically-oriented framework for development that takes stands of Spirituality, Indigenous Knowledge and Ways of Being, and a strong desire for self-determination.

Rev. James Bhagwan is currently the General Secretary of the Pacific Conference of Churches, which is comprised of 33 Churches and 10 National Councils of Churches across 19 Pacific Island states and territories. He is an ordained minister of the Methodist Church in Fiji. A former award winning producer and radio/tv host, he holds a Bachelor of Divinity with Honours from the Pacific Theological College in Suva, Fiji and Masters of Theology in Christian Social Ethics from the Methodist Theological University in Seoul, South Korea. He is involved in social justice issues and ocean health. He is a Board Member for Pacific Women Lead, and is one of the Trustees for the Pacific Disability Forum and the Fijian traditional voyaging society, the Uto Ni Yalo Trust

11. May 2023

From Climate Conflicts towards Environmental Peace

Dr. Rebecca Froese

Doopsgezinde Kerk Utrecht (19:00-20:30hr)

Adress: Oudegracht 270, 3511 NV Utrecht

Climate Change is a risk multiplier to human security and as such one of the major crises to tackle in the 21 st century. In this talk, we will take a social-ecological perspective on the nexus of peace and the environment to ask how the challenges that climate change imposes on societies in different contexts can be addressed and transformed.

Rebecca Froese is an environmental peace and conflict researcher working on land conflicts, conflicts over biodiversity, environmental governance, and social tipping points in relation to sustainable development. She is currently a researcher at the Center for Interdisciplinary Sustainability Research at the University of Münster, Germany.

Registration

To attend these lectures, please register by filling in the following form:

<https://forms.gle/wR3sR49rxQAU9yyd6>

You will receive the ZOOM invitation by e-mail before each lecture.

Contact

More information can be found on: <https://www.religionpeacejustice.com/public-lectures>

For questions, email: religionpeacejustice@gmail.com