

THIS JUST IN

The annual newsletter of the
Institute for Religion, Peace and Justice

DIRECTOR:

Dr. Andrew P. Klager

CORE FACULTY:

Dr. Andrew P. Klager
Dr. Brad Jersak

OFFICIAL PARTNERS:

Orthodox Peace Fellowship
Christian Peacemaker Teams
MARK Centre
The Work of the People
Holy Land Trust

MAJOR INITIATIVES:

- 6-course, fully online, university accredited undergraduate and graduate Certificate in Religion, Peace and Justice
- Peace-related student practicums
- Annual symposium-retreat
- IRPJ Blog | The Perisson Podcast
- *Clarion Journal of Spirituality and Justice*
- Peer-reviewed *Journal of Peace Theology*
- Events and community dialogues



Institute for
Religion, Peace and Justice
St. Stephen's University

Dear friends, stakeholders, and others who are along for the ride!

It's been one year since the Institute for Religion, Peace and Justice (St. Stephen's University) launched on June 9, 2017. A lot has happened since then. A new Institute such as ours is confronted with challenges and opportunities, and we've been active in 2017/18 in many ways to continue our vision. But perhaps more importantly, we've been taking action to set us up well for future years to come.

The Institute for Religion, Peace and Justice wants to position itself as the purveyor of a well-designed, neatly packaged, one-stop curricular destination especially for Christians who want professional development, personal enrichment, or preparation for further studies in peace-related academic fields. These could be anyone from the thoughtful layperson to professional clergy, peace and development workers or aspiring theologians.

In an increasingly polarized political and cultural landscape, IRPJ is trying to become a refuge of intentional hospitality. This is the model we have used and continue to use when carrying out our many activities.

Without further ado, here are a few of the highlights!



FUNDRAISING

We raised over \$22,000 to support our first year of operation. We take the stewardship of this generosity seriously, as we do the trust and confidence our donors have placed in us and the enthusiasm this shows for what we're trying to do. Grateful doesn't begin to express how we feel.

WEBSITE

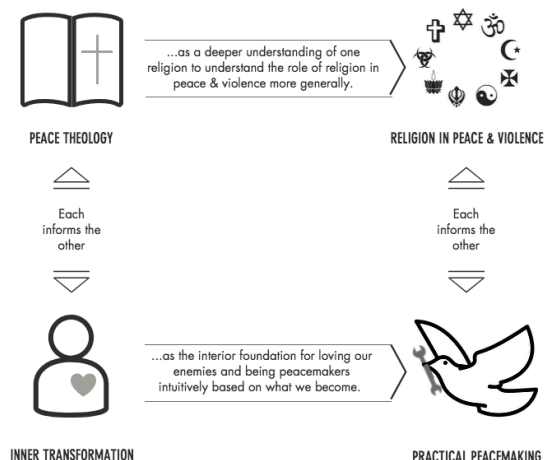
We built, launched, and continue to develop the beautiful and highly functional IRPJ website. We've received so much positive feedback about our website, and we're understandably very proud of it. That said, we also know it could and will be so much more than it already is — resources that fill a real void, interesting

and edifying multimedia, a venue for dialogue and for live look-ins on authentic raw conversations on the challenges of peacebuilding in conflict-ridden regions of the world, and many more ideas. In the meantime, be sure to check out our website if you haven't already (or if it's been a while): www.irpj.org

HOME ABOUT PEOPLE CERTIFICATE APPLY BLOG PUBLISHING PODCAST EVENTS RESOURCES CONTACT DONATE STUDENT LOGIN



Curricular Model



CERTIFICATE

There's no hiding it. Our main initiative and focus is the development of our undergraduate and graduate Certificate in Religion, Peace and Justice. We've designed a 6-course (18 credit hours), fully online, university accredited Certificate program that focuses on the four emphases of IRPJ: the inner transformation of a peacemaker, a theology of peace and justice, the factor of religion in both peace and conflict, and practical peacebuilding and conflict transformation. While some courses were already developed beforehand, we've been busy developing four new courses to round out the Certificate program; for more info on the curriculum design and course descriptions, visit our Certificate page here: www.irpj.org/certificate

BLOG

IRPJ BLOG

We also launched the IRPJ Blog, which we've developed and maintained over the months as an active blog with 25 posts from 13 authors so far. This has been a wonderful venue for discussion and for expressing important single points – "aha moments," the best of the best – to enhance our commitment to nonviolence and reinforce our embrace of enemy love. Check it out:

www.irpj.org/blog

True and False Religion (Part II): Is "Religion" Good or Bad?

June 9, 2018 | Bruxy Cavity



True and False Religion (Part I): A Conversation with Brad Jersak, Andrew Klager, and Sean Davidson

May 31, 2018 | Brad Jersak, Andrew Klager, and Sean Davidson



This is the start of a series on true and false

Featured Posts



The Upside-Down Kingdom of God and the Transfiguration of Christ
February 1, 2018

Recent Posts



True and False Religion (Part II): Is

THE PERISSON PODCAST

Although the IRPJ Blog has become our main format for communicating thoughts and ideas on peace theology, practical peacebuilding, nonviolence, love of enemies, and other related themes, our new podcast called The Perisson Podcast, co-hosted by Andrew Klager and Jarrod McKenna, has been very well-received so far. Our first guest was Brian Zahnd, and we've had 850+ listeners in the first couple weeks. Not bad for just appearing out of the blue!

- website – www.irpj.org/podcast
- iTunes – <https://itunes.apple.com/ca/podcast/the-perisson-podcast/id1387390461?mt=2>
- SoundCloud – <https://soundcloud.com/theperissonpodcast>

GUEST LECTURERS

IRPJ is committed to ensuring our Certificate program includes an eclectic mix of prominent voices. To this end, we've added a number of Guest Lecturers who contribute audio lectures and meet with students for discussion via video conference – for accepting this important role, we're grateful to Stanley Hauerwas, Brian McLaren, Peter Enns, Lisa Schirch, Brian Zahnd, David Moore, Kim Franklin, Terry LeBlanc, Matthew Lynch, Derek Flood, Ron Dart, Robynne Healey, Jarrod McKenna, Ron Dart, Betty Pries, Wayne Northey, Ted Grimsrud, Walter Thiessen, Imbenzi George, Cherie Enns, Fr. Kaleeg Hainsworth, and Fr. Richard Rene.

For more on the backgrounds and expertise of our Guest Lecturers, visit www.irpj.org/guest-lecturers

ADDRESSING THE COST OF TUITION

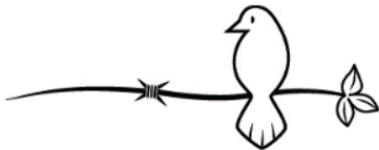
Education is expensive, and this expense can be a barrier. To help reduce this potential barrier, we've tried to pack a lot into fewer courses, without losing the comprehensiveness of the content. But we've also developed the following funding opportunities and programs for students:

- Loan Forgiveness Program – www.irpj.org/forgivable-loan-program
- Coffee Club Discount Program – www.facebook.com/instituteforreligionpeaceandjustice/posts/2092368807641150
- Referral Discount Program – www.facebook.com/instituteforreligionpeaceandjustice/posts/1960311360846896
- all in addition to SSU's funding opportunities available to some qualifying students – www.ssu.ca/funding-your-education/



RELATIONSHIP BUILDING

There's too much infighting among peacemakers – a tragic irony. IRPJ is committed to collaboration, building partnerships, and forging friendships. With this in mind, this year saw us build partnerships in a variety of capacities with the Orthodox Peace Fellowship, Christian Peacemaker Teams, The Work of the People, Holy Land Trust, and the MARK Centre.



christian peacemaker teams

BOARD OF ADVISORS

To help us make wise decisions, IRPJ assembled a Board of Advisors who give informal advice at critical junctures in the life of the Institute: these include Dr. Matt Balcarras, Dr. Kim Franklin, Fr. Michael Gillis, Dr. Robynne Healey, Evy Klassen, Steve Klassen, Dr. Lois Mitchell, and Dr. Jeff Schulz.



Dr. Matt Balcarras
Author and Director of Data Science and Analytics at Starting Minds



Dr. Kim Franklin
Vice Provost Teaching and Learning and Associate Professor of Education, TWU



Fr. Michael Gillis
Parish Priest of Holy Nativity Orthodox Church, Langley, BC



Dr. Robynne Healey
Professor of History and Co-Director of the Gender Studies Institute, TWU



Evy Klassen
Co-Founder of the MARK Centre: Christian Spiritual Restreats, Abbotsford, BC



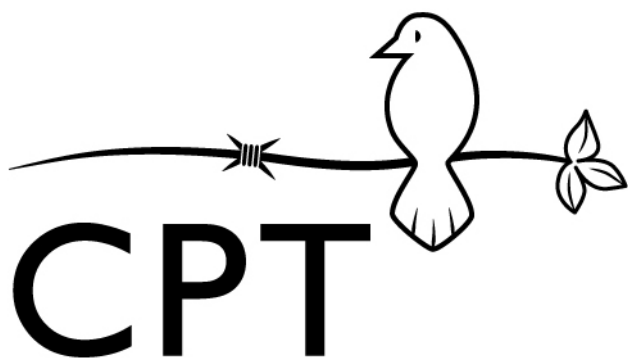
Steve Klassen
Director of the MARK Centre: Christian Spiritual Restreats, Abbotsford, BC



Dr. Lois Mitchell
Director of International Studies at St. Stephen's University



Dr. Jeff Schulz
Family Physician, Fraser Canyon Hospital, Hope, BC



GIVING CREDIT

IRPJ has also initiated a strategy of offering credit for practicums that delegates complete through Christian Peacemaker Teams if they carry on to complete IRPJ's Certificate program. The hope is to draw from those who already passionate about peace and justice but who might want to pursue educational opportunities to round out their practical experience. We hope to continue this trend by offering credit to those who have completed practicum-like placements and want to enrol in IRPJ's Certificate program.

COURSE TRANSFER

IRPJ is also working on course transfer agreements with Columbia Bible College (Abbotsford, BC) and The King's University (Edmonton, AB). The goal here is to fill real voids in institutions that are nevertheless just as enthusiastic about and committed to the principles, values, and vision that IRPJ tries to embody. This is just the first two of what we hope will be many more.



CLARION JOURNAL

In addition to the IRPJ Blog, Dr. Brad Jersak – Lecturer in Peace Theology and one of our core faculty (www.irpj.org/core-faculty) – has continued to take the lead on maintaining the online *Clarion Journal of Spirituality and Justice* (www.clarion-journal.com). This online venue has a wider scope and more fleshed-out articles than what you'd find on the IRPJ Blog.



St. Stephen's University
Public Lecture

**a conversation about
Creating a Plan to Dismantle
White Supremacy**

Tuesday, February 20th, 6:30pm
Wednesday, February 21st, 6:30pm
8 Main Street (Park Hall)
St. Stephen, NB
No Cost – Everyone Welcome

Drawing from history as well as from contemporary political and social contexts, Dr. Moore discusses race relations in America. He will also draw upon his family's microcosmic experience, within the broader United States journey over the past half-century, as Americans, African Americans, and global citizens, describing his personal growth as a joyful and hopeful person living as an advocate for himself and for the disinherited in general.

David N. Moore, Jr., PhD, is a pastor, educator and ecumenical teacher. He attributes his love for the world and ease around people of other backgrounds to his parents and family friendships. Along with his role as a pastor to two churches in Southern California, David is an advocate for Social Justice in the communities he serves. For the past few years he has been a regular guest lecturer at St. Stephen's University.

Dr. David Moore
Pastor, Educator

Institute for Religion, Peace and Justice
st.stephen's university
For more information: Contact: 506.466.1781 or ssu@ssu.ca Facebook: St. Stephen's University

EVENTS

IRPJ has also co-sponsored our first event at St. Stephen's University – Dr. David Moore: "Creating a Plan to Dismantle White Supremacy" (Feb 20/21, 2018) – which was, by all accounts, a fantastic success. View the lectures below:

Part I: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W-E6UoGXO-A>

Part IIa: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Bh7bXXFpws>

Part IIb: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AhybJ96Vs0k>

SOCIAL MEDIA

IRPJ has also maintained a very active and ongoing presence on social media, including Facebook (www.facebook.com/instituteforreligionpeaceandjustice/) and Twitter (@irpj_ssu). This has been a great way to connect with like-minded and unlike-minded folks across the spectrum of feelings, commitments, and ideas about peace and justice. This is also where we provoke discussion and share announcements, quotes that distill wisdom, and important stories.

IRPJ @irpj_ssu · Mar 8
#internationalwomensday2018


"There is no great force for change, for peace, for justice and democracy, for inclusive economic growth than a world of empowered women."
—Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka

IRPJ @irpj_ssu · May 9
#Hauerwas #nonviolence


"War is impatience."
—Stanley Hauerwas

IRPJ @irpj_ssu · 26 Nov 2017
Please continue to pray for @irpj_ssu Guest Lecturer and our courageous brother, @jarrodmckenna, and other Christian leaders from #LoveMakesAWay as they carry out nonviolent direct action on behalf of the refugees on #Manus Island to #EvacuateNow. facebook.com/instituteforre...

IRPJ @irpj_ssu · Feb 7
Anyone who tries to stump someone who embraces nonviolence by asking, "Yeah, but what about the violence in the OT?" reveals their tacit prioritization of the OT over the NT. They should instead learn to ask when they read the OT, "Yeah, but what about the Sermon on the Mount?"



DIRECTOR

IRPJ is led by our director, Dr. Andrew Klager. In addition to developing courses and preparing to teach four courses in the fall and spring semesters, forging new friendships with enthusiastic partners, contributing a number of posts on the IRPJ Blog and articles for the Clarion Journal of Spirituality and Justice, co-hosting The Perisson Podcast with Jarrod McKenna, fulfilling a multitude of administrative responsibilities, and teaching courses at a number of other universities and colleges, Andrew also...



wrote an article on Christian nonviolence for Sojourners Magazine called "Is Nonviolence Naïve?" that made it on the front cover as the featured article of the upcoming July 2018 issue.

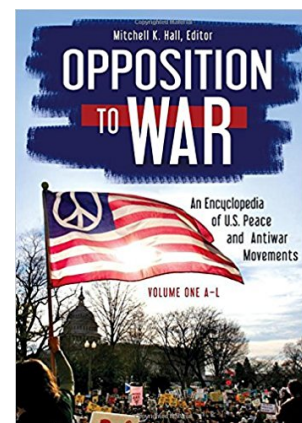


wrote a chapter for the book, *Hellrazed?* (a book sequel to the popular and thought-provoking documentary, *Hellbound?* – "The Church Fathers and Apokatastasis: Mt. Tabor, Gethsemane, and the Final Restoration of Humanity as a Theodrama of Peace," in *Hellrazed*. ed. Kevin Miller, 135–164. Kimberly, BC: Kevin Miller XI Productions, Inc., 2017.



wrote a provocative piece on patriotism and the kingdom of God for the *Huffington Post*: "The Kingdom of God and the Problem of Patriotism." *Huffington Post* (1 July 2017): www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/the-kingdom-of-god-and-the-problem-of-patriotism_us_595766a8e4b0c85b96c6623a

wrote two entries, "Peace History Society," and "National Service Board for Religious Objectors," in *Opposition to War: An Encyclopedia of United States Peace and Antiwar Movements*, edited by Mitchell K. Hall. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2018.



LOOKING AHEAD TO 2018/19

What are we planning on doing in our second year of operation? We have identified a number of objectives to grow the Institute and enhance our initiatives. Without going into too much detail (feel free to contact the director for more info: andrewklager@ssu.ca), here's a sampling of what we're up to:

- We are preparing for our first batch of undergraduate and graduate students in the fall 2018 for the Certificate in Religion, Peace and Justice; this is our primary focus in the coming year.
- We are making initial preparations to move into our first physical location in the MARK Centre, Abbotsford, BC – including an office, teaching space, events space, community discussion space, and accommodations.
- For those who prefer the feel of a hard copy journal, IRPJ is ready to offer print editions of *Clarion Journal of Spirituality of Justice*. We even have our subscription form set up (www.irpj.org/clarion-journal), but we need to work out a few kinks before we make an announcement.
- Talks are already underway to find a prominent publisher who would want to start a peer-reviewed academic *Journal of Peace Theology*. This would, to our knowledge, be the first and only academic journal entirely devoted to peace theology from a broad spectrum of Christian perspectives.
- We have started preparations for the 5-day symposium-retreat in Abbotsford, BC (45 min. east of Vancouver) and Pender Island in the summer 2019 with the Orthodox Peace Fellowship and MARK Centre.
- We would like to set aside money to offer bursaries and scholarships to students in our second year of offering the Certificate in Religion, Peace and Justice.
- We are continuing to forge new and exciting partnerships with a few strategically identified organizations that will allow us to expand our programming. Discussions are too much in their infancy to share any specifics, but there are a few exciting irons in the fire that hold a lot of promise for the near future.
- We have had initial discussions on the possibility of creating a major in Religion, Peace and Justice as an option for BA in International Studies students at St. Stephen's University, or creating a full BA in Religion, Peace and Justice degree at SSU.

Beyond these more immediate goals, IRPJ has set its sights on a number of long-term future goals: teaching intensive Certificate courses at our British Columbia location in the MARK Centre, full-semester on-site Certificate courses at the MARK Centre for a handful of residency students, transposing our curriculum overseas to teach peacemakers in conflict-ridden regions around the world, a permanent physical location in BC solely for IRPJ, funding research on interreligious peacebuilding, producing resources that fill real gaps (I can't find this; let's do it ourselves!), host research fellows, offering semi-monastic cells and retreats for peace sojourners and workers to focus on the inner transformation of a peacemaker, and a 'Catholic Worker'-inspired local engagement by fusing nonviolence and community peacebuilding as the framework for tackling local injustices among the most vulnerable demographics.

As this newsletter shows, we've laid the foundation for many more years to come. If you'd like to join us, contact our director, Dr. Andrew Klager (andrewklager@ssu.ca), to learn how, or give a donation (www.irpj.org/donate). Thank you all for a wonderful year – Your support and encouragement means everything to us!

Peace,



Dr. Andrew P. Klager
Director – Institute for Religion, Peace and Justice