



## Center for Conflict Studies and Peacemaking

Fresno Pacific College

March 2, 1993

This letter is intended to give some explanation on how this Consultation came to be.

Since the mid-1980's a part of our VORP efforts in Fresno have been to spread the idea of a Church Based VORP. We called that effort our VORP Central Function. We provided some resources, directions on where to get resources, some consultation and technical assistance. In 1990 the Center for Conflict Studies and Peacemaking at Fresno Pacific College was initiated and I became Co-Director. Basically I continued what I was doing before but under the umbrella of the college. Two days per week of my time still go to Fresno County VORP. Approximately one day per week was devoted to this Central Function which we more recently named, Restorative Justice Ministries. Our advisory group for that effort includes Steve Penner (West Coast MCC Director), Duane Ruth Heffelbower, Richard Unruh, Dalton Reimer, and Howard Zehr.

Our initial effort has focused primarily on developing a manual for Starting and Sustaining a Church Based VORP, organizing an annual California VORP gathering, and providing consultation and technical assistance as requested.

We decided that while Howard Zehr would be doing a lecture series for the combined Fresno Pacific College and Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary communities, we would take advantage of his being here and gather a few people to address the problems and opportunities surrounding Church Based VORPs. As we called a few people we thought might be interested, the idea and interest grew. We are excited about gathering those who are involved in Restorative Justice ministries and VORP because of their christian faith to look at what has brought us to this point, to share some of the current efforts, and to think together about the future.

We hope this will be a time for encouraging each other and learning from each other.

All who want to join us for this purpose are welcome!!!!

In addition to the Consultation, you are invited to Howard Zehr's lecture on Thursday Evening, there will be a potluck meal preceding the meeting and a reception following where Howard's photo exhibit, "The Meaning of Life" will be displayed. On Saturday morning those who would like to participate are welcome to give us advice on the future of this Consultation and Restorative Justice Ministries.

We will also be having a mini Church Based VORP Office Management, Case Management, Agreement Follow-up Management, Church Sustaining Friend Program Management, Financial Management, etc. training on Thursday, from 9:00am to 3:00pm. A request for this was just received from an emerging VORP in Boulder, CO so we are making this available to anyone who would like to participate.

Shalom

Ron Claassen  
Co-Director

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# First Annual Restorative Justice Ministries Consultation

“Christian Faith, VORP, and the Expanding Restorative Justice Vision”

March 19, 1993

Fresno Pacific College  
Center for Conflict Studies and Peacemaking  
Wiebe Education Center, Room #395A  
1717 S. Chestnut Ave.  
Fresno, CA

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The purpose of this consultation is to provide a forum for people who, because of their Christian Faith, are interested in VORP and other Restorative Justice Ministries. This consultation will provide participants an opportunity to meet each other, support each other, learn from each other and explore together the opportunities and problems we face. A second purpose of this consultation is to encourage the development of Church Based VORPs and other Church Based Restorative Justice Ministries.

## Morning

- 8:30 - 8:45                   Registration (coffee and rolls)
- 8:45 - 8:55                   Devotional, *Paul Binion, Pastor, Westside Church of God, Fresno*
- 8:55 - 9:00                   Welcome, *Ron Claassen, Co-Director Center for Conflict Studies and Peacemaking and Director Fresno Co. VORP*
- 9:00 - 10:00                “Perspective: Restorative Justice Principals, Christian Faith, and the Role of the Church in VORP and other Restorative Justice Programs”  
Panel Members  
*Howard Zehr, Director Mennonite Central Committee Office of Criminal Justice, Akron PA*  
*Dan Van Ness, Prison Fellowship Special Counsel on Criminal Justice, Arlington VA*  
*James Rowland, Retired Director California Department of Corrections, Fresno*  
Open Discussion
- 10:00 - 10:10               Break
- 10:10 - 11:10               “How Christian Faith Impacts Our VORP”  
Panel Members  
*Mike Neimeyer, Orange County VORP*  
*Connie White, VORP of the Central Coast, Monterey and San Luis Obispo Co.*  
*Elaine Enns, Fresno County VORP*  
Open Discussion
- 11:10 - 11:15               Break
- 11:15 - 12:00               “Program, Vision, and Christian Faith: Picking Up the Mantel”  
*Dave Gustafson, Co-Director Community Justice Initiatives, Vancouver, British Columbia*
- 12:00 - 1:00                Lunch (included in \$15 registration fee)  
Walk to McDonald Hall to view Howard Zehr’s photo exhibit “The Meaning of Life” interviews with inmates serving life sentences.

(Afternoon Agenda Continued on Back)

## Afternoon

1:00 - 2:00

“Program, Vision, and Christian Faith: Dangers and Opportunities in Emerging Restorative Justice Ministries Programs”

Panel Members

*Dan Van Ness*

*James Rowland*

*Lorraine Stutzman Amstutz, Program Co-Coordinator for Mennonite Central Committee and*

*Facilitator: Lancaster Co. VORP, Akron PA*

*Doug Lanier, Pastor, Downtown Church, Fresno*

*Jonathan Villalobos, Pastor, Iglesia De Dios, Fresno*

Open Time for Presentation of Emerging Programs

Open Discussion

2:00 - 2:15

Break

2:15 - 3:35

“The Future Role of Christian Faith and the Church in VORP and Other Restorative Justice Ministries”

Panel Members

*Howard Zehr*

*James Rowland*

*Dan Van Ness*

*H. Spees, Director Youth for Christ, Fresno*

*Pastor Duane Ruth-Heffelbower, Peace Community Church, Fresno*

Open Discussion

3:35 - 3:45

Closing Comments, *Howard Zehr*

Closing Prayer “St. Francis of Assisi”