Today the world is in a state of conflict rivaling any time in History. Prejudice, hate, violence, social injustice and environmental destruction dominate the headlines every day.
URI is a global community of people connected by a desire to heal the world.

Contributions from individual donors support a worldwide network that energizes interfaith peacebuilding work across 95 countries.
HUMAN CONNECTION IS THE ANSWER

URI IS A DIVERSE COMMUNITY THAT WORKS TOGETHER TO OVERCOME SHARED PROBLEMS & ACHIEVE REAL PEACE
RESPONDING WITH CARE

Responding to the worldwide crisis, the URI community put out a global call to help refugee families. Inspired by seeing an Austrian CC’s work, Marianne Horling started a similar program in Germany through the Interkultureller Kreis URI Bonn CC. Through art workshops, CC volunteers from different religious backgrounds taught refugee children the German language and how to express their feelings about their journey. Marianne observes, “The children paint the great desire in all of us: to be united on this world in peace.”

IN 2015, MORE THAN ONE MILLION REFUGEES WERE REGISTERED IN GERMANY ALONE

SOURCE: BBC NEWS

“With a gift to URI we know our contribution goes to support a vast network of individuals throughout the world working to build peace. Cooperation Circles are there, on the ground, working to address conflict and able to respond to crisis as it happens.”

SABAHAT RAFIQ AND NAVEED SHERWANI, URI DONORS
“URI’s network gives us the means to address misconceptions, and by discussing them openly, we can help people of different backgrounds to understand each other.”

Sothearat Seoung, Regional Coordinator for URI SEAPAC - West Zone

Broadcasting Peace

Religious and cultural stereotypes prevent people from truly being able to see one another, leading to divided communities where conflict persists. With URI’s support, Sothearat Seoung started a public radio program called “Religions Unite to Build Culture of Peace and Justice.” He invites audiences to engage people of different faiths in dialogue, addressing persistent prejudices and finding ways to cooperate for the good of their communities in Cambodia. For many listeners, the program serves as an introduction to the concept of religious diversity and social harmony.
“Thanks to being part of URI, we came away with a renewed motivation to promote interfaith harmony in our daily lives.”

ASHER NAZIR, CC COORDINATOR FOR URI PAKISTAN

A SEASON OF SHARING

In Pakistan, constant extremist attacks and religiously-targeted terrorist bombings drive Christians and Muslims away from each other out of fear. COPE Pakistan CC provides an opportunity for the two communities to see each other’s religions as a source of kinship rather than a threat. Through a joint Christmas-Eid celebration, they experienced each other’s holy days on a human level, which allowed them to better understand one another. Since then, Muslim families have organized donations for Christian families in need at Christmas.
“As part of URI, our CCs were able to work together and improve conditions for a disadvantaged group in our community.”

FATHER JOHN NG’OMA, URI MALAWI NATIONAL COORDINATOR

RECLAIMING DIGNITY

In Malawi, prisoners endure horrific conditions in congested cells, with many dying daily from inhumane treatment and lack of basic medical care. In response, five CCs – Umodzi CC, Lunzu CC, Lower Shire CC, Matindi CC, and Blantyre CC – organized a prison visit, together with a medical volunteer, to provide basic healthcare and distribute soap, sugar, and bread to the prisoners. This event was part of a larger initiative to construct a hospice within the prison where treatment and food can be distributed to sick prisoners. Reuben Lizi from Lower Shire CC said it was a sobering reminder that even as incarcerated people, “they need our love and care to give them hope.”

IN SOME MALAWIAN PRISONS, 1 IN 20 PRISONERS DIE ANNUALLY DUE TO DISEASE, OVERCROWDING AND BAD NUTRITION.

SOURCE: WIKIPEDIA
As part of the URI community, we work together to overcome the deep divisions across race, religion, and culture which permeate our communities.

ENOE TEXIER, REGIONAL COORDINATOR FOR URI LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

DIVERSITY IN ACTION

Annual URI Regional Assemblies around the world bring together interfaith groups, policymakers, grassroots peacebuilders and thematic experts. The latest URI Brazil Assembly was an affirmation of the communal commitment to change in the face of divisions of race, religion, and culture. The vision for this gathering was to promote dialogue and interaction between URI Cooperation Circles and to create joint action strategies. The attendees, like Elianildo Nascimento, a lawyer and government advisor, and Genivalda Cravo, URI Global Council Member and a holistic therapy guide, worked side by side, planting trees together “to symbolize the rooting and fruiting of our [URI] family ties.”

RELIGIONS REPRESENTED

ANANDA MARGA, BAHAI, BRAHMA KUMARIS, BUDDHIST (TIBETAN, ZEN), CANDOMBLE, CHRISTIANITY (ANGLICAN, CATHOLIC, LUTHERAN, MESSIANIC, PRESBYTERIAN), DEUSISTS, ESPIRITA, ESPIRITU, HINDU, HARE KRISHNA, INDIGENOUS, ISLAM, JUDAISM, MACONARIA, SHINTO, SPIRITUALIST, SUFI, TAOIST, UMBANDA, UNIVERSAL CHURCH, XAMANISMO
“The connections and relationship building opportunities provided by URI – like URI’s partnership with the United Nations – have given us the chance to bring people of all ages together in extremely profound and impactful ways.”

RITA SEMEL, FORMER URI GLOBAL COUNCIL CHAIR AND DONOR

A PATHWAY TO THE UN

Young leaders and grassroots activists have strong voices and vital ideas for bringing justice and peace to our world. Too often they are denied access to government representatives and international platforms, limiting their potential to create change. URI North America sponsored young CC leaders from Kashi Foundation CC, Sun Devils Are Better Together CC, and Silicon Valley Interreligious Council (SiVIC) CC to travel to the United Nations Headquarters in New York City for World Interfaith Harmony Week, which connected them with influential policymakers and gave them a voice to help extend their global reach.
A GLOBAL PRAYER

On a mountain overlooking the Israel-Syria border, the Abrahamic Reunion CC hosted a prayer circle where Jewish, Christian and Muslim leaders offered prayers of peace to direct the world’s attention to Syria’s plight. When they gathered as an interfaith group of Israelis and Palestinians – including sheikhs, rabbis, reverends, and other faith leaders – they bridged the separation between their communities and engaged in a public act of solidarity with each other on behalf of a neighboring war-torn country suffering extreme violence.

“The worldwide network of supporters of URI helped us to magnify the impact of this global synchronized prayer, commanding the attention of international news agencies to report on this positive news from the Holy Land and Middle East.”

ELIVAHU MCLEAN, FOUNDER OF ABRAHAMIC REUNION CC
“As part of URI, our voices are amplified and united to educate the global population about the danger of nuclear weapons and influence international policymakers to remove the nuclear threat once and for all.”

The Right Rev. William E. Swing, URI President and Member of Voices for a World Free of Nuclear Weapons CC

Voices for Peace

We live in the shadow of 15,000 nuclear devices poised to destroy life on Earth. Voices for a World Free of Nuclear Weapons CC is responding to the crisis by engaging influential people from across the political spectrum, as well as scientists and academics, to speak out for a world free of nuclear weapons. Recently, the Cooperation Circle created a video to sway the hearts and minds of policymakers and to call for the eradication of nuclear devices.

CC Members Included

- The Honorable William J. Perry, former Secretary of Defense
- The Honorable George P. Shultz, former Secretary of State
- Dr. Sidney Drell, Professor Emeritus at the Stanford Linear Accelerator
- Ambassador James E. Goodby, former Strategic Nuclear Arms Negotiator with the U.S.S.R.
- Ambassador Thomas Graham, Jr, former Senior U.S. Diplomat
- Dr. Jonathan Granoff, President of the Global Security Institute
- Ms. Monica Willard, URI Representative to the UN

The Honorable George P. Shultz
Former Secretary of State
Under President Ronald Reagan

We ask for your guidance, and we wish to share in your imagination as we deliberate about nuclear force.
Connections have been a cornerstone for URI’s network. For 15 years, URI has fostered meaningful connections by building strong and enduring relationships among people of different religions, spiritual practices and indigenous traditions. Through the network’s support, regional offices and Cooperation Circles have also made key connections to local authorities, government agencies and other likeminded organizations. The stories you’ve read here are merely a handful of examples of the incredible achievements of our Cooperation Circles around the world.

The proven success of the URI network demonstrates that interfaith peacebuilding works. It is the foundation for transforming cultures of violence and war into cultures of peace, justice and healing. By working together and leveraging the resources provided by the network, URI’s connected interfaith coalitions address critical social issues in their communities and their regions – thereby responding to present-day conflicts, as well as helping prevent future conflict.

We have witnessed the predictability and consequences of religious and cultural “disconnection.” While these disconnections get the headlines, connections make peace possible.

The sustainability of this vibrant, critical and global network is made possible by the passion and generosity of the partners who give to URI. We thank you for your steadfast support, and for the important part you play in helping bring peace, justice and healing to the world.

Kiran Bali, MBE JP, URI Global Council Chairperson

The Reverend Victor H. Kazanjian, Jr., URI Executive Director

The Right Reverend William E. Swing, URI President and Founder

THANK YOU
OUR
CONNECTION IS OUR STRENGTH
OUR DONORS

JANUARY 1, 2015 TO DECEMBER 31, 2015

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91 NEW COOPERATION CIRCLES

In 2015, URI was proud to welcome a record-breaking 91 new Cooperation Circles—a 32 percent increase over last year. This growth also marks the entry of eight new countries into our global network, including China.

URI – UNITED NATIONS JOINT ANNIVERSARY

A joint ceremony at Grace Cathedral in San Francisco celebrated the UN’s 70th anniversary together with URI’s 15th anniversary, honoring an inspiration and partnership that has held strong since URI’s inception.

INTERFAITH SPECIAL ON CHRISTMAS EVE

CBS Television Network invited URI to produce an hour-long Interfaith Special on Peace broadcast on Christmas Eve. This special reached four million US households, as well as thousands of others globally through social media, classroom and community screenings.

WWW.URI.ORG/CBS
For the past 15 years, URI’s growing numbers of Cooperation Circles have spread to 95 countries in what is now the largest grassroots interfaith peacebuilding organization in the world. URI plays a critical role in reducing violence and building cultures of peace, justice and healing.
URI IS SINCERELY GRATEFUL TO OUR LEADERS FOR THEIR VISION, ENERGY AND COMMITMENT.

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KEY REVENUE & EXPENSE INFORMATION
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2015**

TOTAL REVENUE $3,774,722*

- INDIVIDUALS: $1,581,938
- FOUNDATIONS/CORPORATIONS: $1,490,618
- FUNDRAISING EVENT: $200,666
- CHALLENGE GRANT & SPECIAL FUNDS: $501,500

TOTAL EXPENSES $3,193,154

- $1,804,388: GLOBAL REGIONS
- $268,774: GLOBAL COUNCIL
- $259,307: COMMUNICATIONS
- $299,037: FUNDRAISING
- $217,857: MANAGEMENT & GENERAL
- $343,791: EDUCATION & OUTREACH

* URI ALSO RECEIVED $865,266.20 AS A DONOR RESTRICTED CONTRIBUTION TO THE STRATEGIC RESERVES. THIS AMOUNT IS NOT INCLUDED IN THE 2015 TOTAL REVENUE.

** COPIES OF THE AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS ARE AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST.