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From: Michael/Lorri Hardin <[preachingpeaceorg@yahoo.com](mailto:preachingpeaceorg@yahoo.com)>

Date: Mon, Sep 25, 2017 at 9:56 AM

Subject: Peace of the Gospel Conference Cancelled

To: Michael/Lorri Hardin <[preachingpeaceorg@yahoo.com](mailto:preachingpeaceorg@yahoo.com)>

Dear Friend,

This e-mail comes with a great deal of sadness; The Peace of the Gospel Conference in Santa Fe November 2-4 has had to be cancelled. First, I will refund all ticket sales (and will explain below how this will be done). Second, some of you have asked for an explanation, so here it is:

When we selected the speakers for the conference, we were turned down by persons of color (except for one). So we went with the line-up we had. On April 28 Kathy Khang (who goes by the moniker 'Ms. Nasty' on Facebook) sent out a tweet condemning the conference and this was followed up by a hatchet job article by Anita Little in Religion Dispatches on May 8 which went viral. Neither of these persons contacted Preaching Peace before launching their vitriolic tirade. We immediately issued a diversity statement (which evidently fell on deaf ears). A couple of speakers offered to help find persons of color that fit the non-sacrificial theological model we were hoping to articulate at the conference but it was two months before anything came through. By the end of June because ticket sales plummeted, staff had not been paid for two months. By mid-July despite all the heroic efforts put in by the (now volunteer) staff, we could not resurrect the conference. Douglas Campbell and Carlos Rodriguez stepped in at that point where the other speakers had failed us and sought to bring the conference to fruition by by mid-August, but with \$70,000 in debt (contractual obligations), it became apparent to me that we were not going to be able to produce the event and so at the end of August it was cancelled. Preaching Peace, the sponsor of The Peace of the Gospel Conference, had been assassinated by the politically correct militant progressive Christian camp.

All staff grieved and had to find alternate means of employment including myself this summer. I am the single lone 'volunteer' left to clean up this mess. Inasmuch as I have integrity, unlike certain so-called progressive Christian leaders, I will pay back every single ticket sale no matter how long it takes. I cannot promise more than that inasmuch as I am supporting (on a very simple lifestyle) my family. Preaching Peace currently has about \$2,500 a month in monthly support from donors which we will use to pay back your ticket sales in the order they were purchased, and I will be adding every single last penny I can over the next year to see that this promise is fulfilled. I am not a tech person and just figured out how to find all your e-mail addresses.

This bitter experience has been a journey, full of all manner of life lessons, the primary one of which is that I have chosen to walk away from Christianity and its culture wars and hypocrisy and militant ways. I have served the church for 42 years as a chaplain, a pastor and an independent theologian. I am now 60 years of age with no savings, no retirement account and have lived on a meager salary for this entire time believing that I was called to 'give myself away' to the poor and that my life means would be provided. It didn't turn out that way. I have worked 75-80 hour weeks for fifteen years with a one week vacation (and because I could not afford a proper vacation I stayed at a friend's

house every year). So while you are out the price of a ticket because of the actions of the militant Progressive Christian Left, I am left without a life. Fifteen years of hard work developing the Preaching Peace brand was flushed down the toilet this spring by so-called 'Christian [sic] persons who valued their militancy and vitriol over right relationships.

All this to say that I will pay back every ticket. And when that is done sometime early next year, I will wipe the dust off my feet and leave the Christians to fight, kill and destroy one another; I no longer have any interest in being part of a religious tradition that eats their own. I wish you well in your life; I have to figure out what to do with these last years given me. You may, if you wish, e-mail me that you will consider your 'ticket/s sales' to be a tax deductible donation to Preaching Peace ( a 501c3 ). If I do not hear from you I will be refunding them in the order in which they were received. Some have suggested legal action, which is their right. But try getting blood from a turnip; we have no assets, no buildings, nothing.

I am grieved to have to write this e-mail. I don not know what else to say.

Peace,

Michael Hardin

Volunteer Executive Director for Preaching Peace

Michael and Lorri Hardin

Preaching Peace