

## **“Joyful Resistance as a Practice of Hope”**

*Plenary Presentation by Joe Volk to the Lake Erie Yearly Meeting Annual Meeting June 19, 2026 in Ashland Ohio.*

At this critical moment in our country’s history. I will share a few stories of my past experiences in Joyful Resistance as a Practice of Hope as a way to encourage you to share your stories of today’s resistance and to create more of them.

### **Introduction:**

I am a product of resistance to the U.S. War in Vietnam. A Vietnamese saying stays with me: “The accumulation of great wealth is not so much a sign of great success as it is a sign of great selfishness.” In 2012, Joseph Stiglitz published *The Price of Inequality: How Today’s Divided Society Endangers Our Future*. Today, in 2026, just 14 years later, that price is being paid by all of us ...

- in the wrecking of our federal government, threats on our election systems, and efforts to end separation of church and state,
- in the ICE war at home on innocent children, women, and men,
- in attempts to undermine public education,
- in cover ups of our real history with fact-less myths,
- in attempts to blind our public to the reality of human-caused climate change,
- in replacing “the Rule of Law for all of us” with “Authoritarians Ruling all of us by Law.”
- in unauthorized wars abroad and illegal “boat wars” on alleged drug runners.

Now we all are called to stand up in many different ways to speak truth to power, exercise Love as the first motion, to take risks of faith to rebuild our communities, our government, and the prospect for future generations. Your talents and choices will make a difference.

My 20th century stories about my choices are old, but you might find something in them relevant to our 21st century crisis.

### **A bionote:**

I am not a birthright Friend. I grew up in conservative communities. My family was neither pacifist nor progressive.

When I was born in 1945. My parents named me Earl Joseph after two uncles still in World War II combat zones. We lived on a small farm near Blanchester Ohio, a solid Republican congressional district.

In a Methodist Youth Fellowship meeting, when I was a teenager, we read the Garden of Gethsemane passage where Jesus told Peter to lay down his sword. I asked our pastor, Reverend Roy T. Ballard, a WWII Merchant Marine veteran, “Isn’t Jesus calling us to lay down our swords and rely on love, on nonviolence?” He replied, “Joe, you could read scripture that way, but, if you do, you’re going to get into a whole lot of trouble.”

So, how did I end up serving in two Quaker organizations for most of my working life? The answer is that I went into the U.S. army to try to resist the war in Vietnam, and that’s where I first met the AFSC and the Religious Society of Friends.

Graduating from college in August 1966, I found a job as a public school teacher at Lakota Jr. High in West Chester, Ohio. It came with a draft deferment.

I liked teaching. I liked the kids, their parents, and my colleagues. I liked living in Oxford, Ohio and commuting in my old VW to West Chester. So, why did I resign at the end of the first semester, December 1966? I didn’t know why. I just felt compelled to return to Miami for graduate studies. I got a deferment for that too.

### **Following a Leading to Resistance:**

In February 1967, I sat in a theology seminar on the 3rd floor of Upham Hall. The thought came to me that I was studying pure theology and, now, my time had come to leave that too. Why? It was because I asked myself, “Could Jesus see his words in my deeds?” I answered, “No, I wasn’t yet acting on his words in these troubled times; my time had come to practice theology.” Only then did I realize that I had resigned from my teaching job because of what I didn’t like.

I didn’t like the U.S. war in Vietnam. I didn’t like the biased Selective Service System. Here I was a privileged white guy, privileged by race, by education, by economic class, and by employment. Now, thanks to all those privileges — deserved or not — I was given another “life saving” privilege: a deferment from the military draft. I didn’t like that.

I sent my deferment card back to my draft board in Wilmington, Ohio. My letter said I couldn’t accept the privilege of a deferment, and I would not go fight in Vietnam. I said no to authority, and it scared me. Years later, I learned that Lucretia Mott had eloquently described what I had done. She said, “My conviction led me to adhere to the sufficiency of the light within us, resting on truth for authority, not on authority for truth.”

What I did was a private act of faith and conscience. I wasn’t affiliated with any movement groups, didn’t discuss it with others, not family, friends, mentors, nor pastor. I had taken my letter, with my draft card enclosed, to the mailbox on the sidewalk in front of the Post office on

High Street in Oxford, Ohio. It was about 11 PM on a cold winter's night, Tuesday, February 28, my 22nd birthday.

No one else was on the street. I dropped the business envelope into the slot. In the silence, I thought, "I've just sealed my fate." Then I heard the corner of the envelope ping the metal bottom of that empty mailbox. It sounded like a small cymbal at a church service. A warm shiver went through me. I knew I would be alright.

I didn't know whether my mother, my father, and my brother would be alright. They might dread and resent the humiliation that my actions would cost them in our small, conservative rural town. I regretted that, but my parents had sent me to Sunday school where I heard stories of Jesus resistance and to college where I learned about rules of war. As for my younger brother, I was doing this to protest a war that neither he nor any other young American should have been asked to fight.

My Wilmington, Ohio draft board was more understanding than one might suppose. They bent over backward to help me. We exchanged a few letters. First, they answered me with a letter and a Selective Service Form 150. Just fill out this form, return it, we'll give you conscientious objector status, and you can do alternative service.

I replied that I didn't know if I was with St. Augustine and Reinhold Niebuhr for Just War or with Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr. for nonviolence. So, I couldn't truthfully say that I was a conscientious objector. They replied that they understood, but just go ahead and fill out the form and return it. I replied thank you, but I can't do that. It wouldn't be truthful.

They replied: please fill it out, or we'll have to draft you. I sat with that final offer one night, and then replied that I couldn't in good conscience send them the form, because I didn't know if I was a CO, and I understood that they would draft me.

In late May, I got a surprise, a package in the mail. It was from Lakota Junior High School. When I opened it, I saw a trophy. The accompanying letter explained that the students had voted me "The Best Teacher of the Year." Tears came to my eyes, and I felt regret for having resigned. I was going to lose a wonderful life in public education that might have been, but for the troubled times we were living in then.

With my looming induction into the army, clearly, I didn't have a plan. I was taking a first step in a direction toward which my faith and education seemed to be pulling me. Today, thanks to my exposure to Friends' practice, I know that I was following the Light that had been given me so far and no more and was waiting for a leading what to do next.

My notice of induction had arrived. On June the 13th, my mother served me an early breakfast, the usual eggs over easy, toast with butter and jam, fried potatoes, coffee that looked like tea, and a half grapefruit with sugar on top. Then she drove me the 18 miles from Blanchester to Wilmington to be inducted at 6:45 AM.

In Wilmington, I checked in, was put on a bus with a lot of other guys my age, and driven to an induction center in Hamilton, Ohio. Would I refuse to be inducted and go to jail or go into the army, refuse orders to Vietnam, and go to an army prison? Whichever, I would accept the consequences. Why? It was due to wisdom shared by a seasoned person of faith.

My professor of religion and ethics, Roland Delattre, had taken a small group of us south to Atlanta. We went to a conference on ethics and religion at Emory University. What I recall clearly was our small group meeting with Reverend James Lawson, who played a key role in constructing the nonviolent direct action strategies of the civil rights movement.

Among the lessons that he underlined for me was this: the question is not: will I suffer if I do this? No, we all will suffer; rather, the question is: to what purpose will I put my suffering. I took that lesson with me on my journey.

### **Finding a Direction:**

The US military was among the first federal departments to be de-segregated. President Harry Truman did that with Executive Order 9981 on July 26th, 1948. That came to my mind when, on May 13th, 1967, I was called into an examining room at the Induction Center for my physical and saw my examiner.

He was an African-American soldier. I'm pretty sure he was a noncom, perhaps a Specialist in the Medical Corps. He was polite, competent, and efficient. He had a lot of exams to do that day, but he didn't rush my exam.

My physical exam went well until some questioning. Did I ever have any serious illnesses? Yes. What were they? I had suffered kidney failure at 13 and almost died. He winced and said something like, "Oh, I'm not sure I can clear you." I replied, "I'm was sure my kidneys are ok now." He furrowed his brow and asked, "Really, are you sure?" I replied, "Yes."

Then he asked, "Anything else?" I said, "No." But, he held out his two hands and said, "Let me see your hands." I held my hands in front of him. He took my right hand and placed it on his left fist and said, "Squeeze my fist as hard as you can." I did. He said, "Good." Now he extended his right fist and said, "Squeeze my fist as hard as you can with your left hand." I did as he instructed.

He didn't like what he felt, "What happened to your left hand?" he asked. I made light of it, "Oh, just an accident." Unsatisfied, he asked, "What kind of accident?" I told him an industrial accident, and he became more insistent, "What kind of industrial accident, be specific."

So, I told him about the 35 ton punch press that malfunctioned at the Aeronca factory in Middletown, Ohio. It crushed my fingers and hand and clipped off the tip of a finger in a die for shaping metal. To that he shook his head, and, without a pause, he said, "Oh, man, its too bad you're left handed. I can't clear you for induction with that hand."

I told him, "I'm right handed. It's ok. I can do everything I need to do." In response, he took both my hands in his; he squeezed them to get my attention, and, giving me a piercing look, he said emphatically, "It's a damn shame that you're left handed, because, with that injury, I can't clear you for induction. Understand?" I did understand that he was trying to help me out — out of the draft and the army.

I looked back at him and said, "Yes, I understand, but it's okay because I'm right handed." He dropped my hands in a gesture of failure and simply said, "Okay, you are right-handed, and you are also the dumbest white boy I've ever met!" I didn't take offense. He said that in the nicest way possible and with a smile on his face.

I believe that, during the process of my induction physical with him, what I was supposed to do was revealed to me. In that moment, it came to me. I should go into the army, walk with my peers, try to share what I knew about the rules of war, the Nuremberg principles, the civil war in Vietnam, the Geneva Accords, and, most importantly, why we citizen-soldiers should have not only a right but a responsibility to refuse to go fight an illegal, unjust US war in Vietnam.

I would follow that nonviolent principle that I learned from talking with Reverend James Lawson and from reading Gandhi: accept voluntary self-suffering to try to reveal truth to myself and to my community. I wanted to put my suffering to a worthy purpose.

So, that's the start of my experiences in resistance. I went into the army. During Basic Training, I decided that I was a CO. I passed out FOR "We won't go!" pledge cards to all my buddies. In 1968, I refused movement to Vietnam. Yet I did not get a general court martial for that and later received an honorable discharge. Unknown to me at the time and unlikely as it may seem, I had just taken my first step into the U.S. peace movement, toward the Religious Society of Friends, in the direction my future spouse whom I didn't know then, toward a wonderful 18 years with the AFSC and 21 with the FCNL. I did indeed ruin the life I had, but, as promised in scripture, I was given a new life.

## **Nonviolent Canoe Blockade of U.S.S. America:**

I had processed out of the Army in May 1969, Beth and I got married in March 1970. In late 1971, I applied for a military counseling job at Quaker House in Fayetteville, North Carolina, near Fort Bragg. Remember, I was doing this by snail mail. I got a reply letter from the chairperson of the personnel committee. He explained that they could not consider me for the position, because the Quaker House had been bombed, and they had temporarily suspended operations. Kindly, he had forwarded my application to the AFSC Southeast Regional Office in High Point, North Carolina. That's how I got my first job with AFSC as their regional Nonviolence Training and Action Coordinator.

Beth and I moved to High Point in May 1972 with our 2 month old son, Joshua. By June, with the U.S. War in Vietnam continuing, we met other AFSC and AQAG (A Quaker Action Group) members in Norfolk, Virginia. David Hartsough and Robert Levering had recruited and organized for a nonviolent canoe blockade of the aircraft carrier, the USS America. It was leaving in a few days with a crew of a couple thousand and a lot of aircraft for bombing missions in Vietnam. President Richard Nixon and National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger were escalating the air war. Our crew of about 25 volunteers — young and old, women and men — would attempt to blockade that huge aircraft carrier with our 12 canoes and 1 folding kayak. We would have to paddle across Hampton Rhodes waters and breach a security zone to reach the docked aircraft carrier.

Local Norfolk Friends made their home available for our nonviolent training and planning sessions a few days before the action.

I remember a session with a well qualified attorney who briefed us on the legal consequences of our action. He said something like, "You may be charged with violations of a National Security Act with penalties up to \$50,000 and 10 years in jail." From the back of the room, someone asked, "Will we get the full penalties or might we be sentenced with less?" The attorney replied, "Listen, none of you will have to pay a fine or do time. I've sailed those waters for years, and I know that there is no way in hell that you can canoe those rough waters. You are all going to drown." Everyone burst out laughing. No one dropped out.

On the departure day for the USS America, family and friends of the USS America's crew gathered on the dock to wave goodbye to their loved ones who served on that ship. Our "armada" of 12 canoes and 1 folding kayak gathered in front of the ship. The people on the dock could see us.

To our surprise, we saw a fellow in an army uniform on the dock taking off his clothes, right down to his underwear. Then he jumped off the dock and into the water. He swam to one of

our canoes and said, "My friend is on that ship, and I don't want him to go. Can I join you?" He was welcomed aboard.

Way above us was the aircraft carrier's top deck with hundreds of the crew looking down on us. From such a distance, we couldn't hear what they were saying. They appeared to be friendly. Coast Guard cutters — with the low stern down close to the water — came at us, swerved around just before hitting our canoes, then slowly backed up toward each canoe. They caught hold of our canoes with long-handled devices, pulled them close against their vessels, and then grabbed us one at a time, pulled us up on that low stern, and then turned around to get the next person. While their backs were turned, the "caught" protester would walk to the far side of the cutter, dive into the water, swim back to the canoe, and climb in. After this routine went on and on, the Coast Guard cutters started their engines and slowly left us in our canoes and encircled us at some distance. The aircraft carrier remained at the dock. We had a time of silence in our canoes just being present and in the way.

Minutes passed, perhaps an hour. All was quiet. Suddenly, our canoes flipped over, we splashed into the water. Someone grabbed me and pulled me under. I couldn't get away, and, just when I thought I couldn't hold my breathe any longer, that someone pushed me up and out of the water. I took in a deep breath. The realization came to me that US Navy Seals had been deployed under water to capture us — one Navy Seal for each of us. Mine took me to one of those coast guard cutters and made sure I couldn't jump back into the water. Pretty soon our entire group was on cutters headed for a Navy ship.

The Navy Seals escorted us up the ladder on the side of the ship's hull to the top deck, they put half of us on the bow and half of us on the stern. Then the ship headed out into the Atlantic. We couldn't see the USS America when it departed. On our way out to sea the Navy Seals told us that we would be arrested when we returned to the docks after the aircraft carrier was well out to sea.

Eventually, our detention ship returned to port and docked. Our Navy Seals pointed to the ladder leading down to the dock and told us, "Down the ladder, then out the dock, at the end of the dock you'll find your canoes, take your canoes and get the hell out of here."

As we all walked away, I felt a tap on my shoulder, looked around, and there was the Navy Seal who had pulled me under water. He stopped me and said, "Let me ask you a question. If another ship was going to leave for Vietnam, would you try doing this again?" I replied, "Yes, of course, but why would you ask?" He replied, "Oh, man, you have no idea how boring our assignment here can be. This is the most fun we've had in weeks." I explained, "Well, you know that it is very difficult for us to learn when a ship is leaving for Vietnam. How can we find out?" He said, "Give me your phone number, and I'll let you know." We only had landlines then.

I did give him my phone number, but I never got a call. Nevertheless, his question to me and his demeanor gave me an impression that our time with the Navy Seals out in the Atlantic had bridged a gap between us. I felt this was a day well spent, and, on top of that, our group had acted as a beloved community.

Our nonviolent canoe blockade made the local and national news. Our message calling for an end to the U.S. war joined with other such messages. People power for peace continued to grow as did the peace movement inside the US military.

The USS America went on to make its way through the Panama Canal to the Pacific, sailed up to California for refueling and supplies, and then sailed west for Vietnam. Rumors that I cannot verify said that midway on their route, the aircraft carrier's steering mechanism was badly damaged due to dumping of tools into it. The USS America had to be diverted to Subic Bay for repairs, delaying its movement to Vietnam.

### **A White House Pray-in:**

In 1999, the post-Cold War break up of Yugoslavia led to nationalist divisions, wars, and lethal ethnic cleansing — the Balkan Wars. These wars prompted the US, UN, NATO, and other European actors to intervene to try to keep the peace.

We at FCNL were privileged to work with a well organized, well informed, compassionate interfaith community of the Washington offices of many different faiths, including Mainline Protestants, Jewish, Catholic, Orthodox Christian, Islamic, Peace Churches, and others. It was called The Washington Interreligious Staff Community, WISC. Decisions were always made by consensus.

Thus, when the U.S. and other NATO forces added to the violence in the former Yugoslavia by bombing civilian targets in Serbia, our interfaith community reached a decision that we had to take nonviolent direct action and civil disobedience to protest that bombing.

After much discussion and worship, our interfaith community decided to hold an interfaith prayer vigil at the White House. Our protest would include praying at the front driveway of the White House, until we were arrested for blocking it.

As word of our decision got around, some friends and allies advised us not to engage in civil disobedience at the White House. We had good relations with the Clinton White House, and, to make progress on other important issues, we shouldn't "burn our bridges." Sage and pragmatic advice perhaps, but we didn't take it.

My interfaith colleagues assigned me the task of informing the White House security officials of our plan, date, and time for our civil disobedience action. Someone gave me the right phone number to call.

I returned to the FCNL office on Capitol Hill, sucked in my breath, closed my office door, and dialed the number.

A nice guy answered. Lets call him "Jack." He introduced himself as the officer in charge and invited me to tell him why I had called. He put me at ease with his tone and openness. I tried to do the same for him.

I explained that I was calling on behalf of the Washington Interreligious Staff Community to inform the appropriate White House security office that we planned a nonviolent civil disobedience pray-in at the front gate of the White House. I named the date and time and closed saying that we knew that 20 or more of us would have to be arrested.

"Jack" replied matter of factly that our plan would not be a problem and that we would not be arrested. I asked him why not. He explained, "Well, we never use that entrance, so you won't be blocking any traffic." Disappointed, I said, "I understand, but we have to be arrested for our public witness."

"Jack" patiently informed me, "If you want to be arrested, then you'll have to block an entrance that we actually use." I asked him if he could tell me which entrance that would be.

"Sure, that would be the back entrance on the other side of the White House. Your group could get arrested there."

I answered, "I'm sorry, but that won't work for us. We need to be at the front entrance where the news media routinely show the White House."

In his easy style, "Jack" said, "I see what you mean, but I don't know whether that's possible. Let me see what I can do. I'll give you a ring back. What's your number?" I gave him my number, said thank you and goodbye, expecting never to hear from him again.

I sat in my chair wondering what to do next. How would I convey this bad news to my interfaith community colleagues? What kind of "Plan B" could we come up with and fast? Before I could leave my office, my phone rang. It was "Jack." I braced myself for the bad news.

"O.K., the front entrance it is. We'll see you on the day." I managed to say, "Thank you, I appreciate it." Quick goodbyes were exchanged, and the matter was settled.

On the day, we religious leaders, some in clerical collars or other religious garb, gathered outside the front gate of the White House. The gate was closed. I went to the guard house to ask for "Jack," and a fellow there replied, "Is that you, Joe?" I told him we were starting.

By then, our lectern had been set up with a portable loud speaker. Our audience of co-religionists gathered to listen to a series of homilies, prayers, and a song or two. Then, some twenty of us walked to the White House gate, we knelt in the driveway and prayed. News media were there, as we had hoped.

As we prayed kneeling, I heard coming from the guard house a stage whisper, "Psst! Joe, not yet, we're not ready. Go back and talk some more." I got my colleagues to return to the lectern.

A few minutes passed, a few more homilies and songs were offered. Then "Jack" came over, stood behind me, and whispered, "OK, we're all set. You can kneel down now."

I passed the word to our moderator, and she announced that we would kneel in prayer to stop the bombing of civilians and civilian targets in the former Yugoslavia.

We knelt down to block the driveway. A minute passed, and then we heard an engine running and a slight sound of tires on pavement. Soon, a pickup truck appeared on the other side of the gate, driven by a White House guard. It stopped at the closed gate.

Then a White House guard — it was "Jack" — walked out on our side of the gate to inform us that the gate needed to be opened to let the truck pass. He asked us to move out of the way, please. He returned to the guard house.

We didn't move. A minute or so later, "Jack" returned to say the same thing. Back to the guard house he went. We didn't move. Returning a minute later, he changed his message. Now he was more stern and sounded less friendly. He commanded us to move by his third warning, or we would be arrested and removed by the guards. We didn't move.

"Jack" gave warnings one, two, and three. We remained on our knees. More White House guards came out with zip-locks in their hands. One by one, we were handcuffed and walked to a van. No one was mistreated, and we didn't resist arrest. From the van, I was able to make eye contact with "Jack" and nodded a thank you. The van was locked and departed for a processing building over at the Navy Yards.

With us removed, the front White House gate was opened, the pickup truck drove out, and, no doubt drove around to the back of the White House and returned through the back entrance to its parking spot. Our action made the news.

But had we "burned our bridges" with the Clinton Administration?

Some weeks passed. One late fall evening, while working at my tiny desk in our little garage apartment on Ridge Road in Arlington, I was preparing for a press conference that FCNL had organized for the next day. Again, religious leaders of WISC would gather, this time on the Senate side of The Capitol.

Soon the Senate would debate whether to ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, the CTBT. President Clinton had submitted the treaty to the Senate for ratification. Ratification was in doubt. We sought to demonstrate public support for the CTBT and to make public the many arguments for it.

My home phone rang. I answered it. "Joe, this is Maureen at the White House." She was working late too. I immediately wondered: why would she be calling me? I knew right away who she was, the White House Liaison to Religious Communities. So, I greeted her and asked, "What's up?"

Maureen explained that her call was about the CTBT (Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty). She said the president had heard that I was organizing a press conference of religious leaders in support of the CTBT for tomorrow morning on The Hill. I replied, "Yes, that's right."

Maureen said that President Clinton needed all the support he can get for ratification now, and he would like to invite me to bring the group of religious leaders to the White House for our press conference. He would host it in the Rose Garden tomorrow morning. Could I accept his invitation, please? Of course, I did.

### **Seeking an Earth Restored:**

Sometimes joyful resistance will be to a dominant culture and its way of doing things, not resistance to particular laws. That was the case back in the late 1990s when we FCNL staff started having weird experiences in our old office building on Capital Hill, on the corner opposite the Hart Senate office building.

What was that weird experience? Well, in those days we didn't have digital files. We had paper files. A lot of file folders packed with a lot of documents. These files were kept in heavy steel file cabinets with 5 or more drawers on all 3 floors of that old wooden house. As we walked down the aisles between desks, the file drawers would slide open. Also the creaking wooden floors got louder.

I brought in an architectural engineer to assess the situation. She urged us to move all those heavy file cabinets to the basement to prevent the collapse of the building. She emphasized that this move should be made in days, not weeks. We followed her advice.

After careful consideration, our committee concluded that we had to reconstruct our historic Capitol Hill building. That's when our committee came face to face with the culture of the systems for such reconstruction projects and the conflict between those systems and our Quaker mission.

What was our Quaker mission in this case? Here's a quote from the FCNL's mission statement, "We seek an earth restored."

That phrase, informed the FCNL committee's governing decision what to do. The committee chose to renovate in a way that would "seek an earth restored." Finding an architect for doing the project in that way was a challenge.

In addition, our committee sought a firm that would employ a female architect early in her career. They found an architecture firm, Burt Hill, that would do everything possible to create a green building, even though FCNL lacked sufficient capital for such a project and who would assign a woman to lead it. The project was led by Gina Baker.

In the early 2000s, we staff moved to temporary offices off Capital Hill. Deconstruction and then reconstruction took 18 months. In August 2005, we staff moved into the first Leed Certified Green office building on Capitol Hill.

A couple weeks after our move into our green building, I had an encounter with a neighbor of FCNL who was and still is a Member of Congress, Rep Joe Wilson of the 2nd Congressional District of South Carolina. He knocked on FCNL's front door one evening about 6. I saw that he was a Member of Congress and welcomed him and his staff person to come in. "Oh, you don't want me to come in, I'm a Ronald Reagan conservative Republican, and I don't agree with anything you Quakers say. I just watched this ugly hole in the ground for 2 years and heard it was a 'green building,' so I just want to ask you, what the hell is a green building?"

"Well, please come in and let me show you our LEED certified green building," I replied. He and the staffer stepped into our reception area. Immediately, he was staring at the floor, and, without looking up, asked me, "What's that?" I replied, "Congressman, that's our new bamboo flooring." He retorted, "Is not!" He got down on his knees to take a closer look and saw the bamboo patterns in it. "OK, it's a bamboo wood floor, but where did you you get it?" he asked in an accusatory tone. "Congressman, we tried to buy it here in the States and couldn't find any. So, we ended up getting it from China."

With that, he got up, gave his staffer a light punch in his shoulder, "Get your notebook out. Write this down. Bamboo flooring. We can make that in South Carolina." We spent the next half hour touring the geothermal heating and cooling, the green roofing, and other aspects of the building. About a week later, I got a call from Joe Wilson asking for the name of our geothermal subcontractor.

Oh, and one more thing, today, Gina Baker is the Chief Sustainability Officer for the New York City Department of Buildings. Resistance can have positive outcomes, when we dare to do it.

**Closing:**

In closing, I think my early choices toward resistance emerged from a practice similar to that of early Friends who sought to follow Jesus, a young illiterate Jewish tradesman who lived in a small rural village, not the Jesus of centuries of ritual and doctrine. Neither I nor early friends had the benefit of today's collaborative of historians seeking to identify the historical Jesus.

In *Who On Earth Was Jesus? The Modern Quest for the Jesus of History*, British Friend David Boulton gives us an account of historical Jesus scholarship. They have found that very little is known about the man Jesus, except that he preached love, resisted imperial authoritarians and corrupt priests, and was executed for that.

Now, in that context, I want to return to 1968 when my father asked me after I had refused movement to Vietnam and before my court martial on a minor charge of AWOL, "Joe, who brainwashed you? Who took over your mind?" I replied, "It was you and mom. You took me to Sunday school and church every week. I absorbed lessons, like love thy neighbor, love thy enemy, do good to those who hate you." My father erupted, "Jesus H. Christ, Joe! You're supposed to believe that stuff! You're not supposed to do it!"

Although we actually don't have many facts about Jesus, one thing that I think we can discern from what historians have found is this: yes, we are supposed to "do it" out in the world.