

40 YEARS

AUGUST DESERT WITNESS

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**A TIME TO
REMEMBER
A TIME TO ACT**

**FELLOWSHIP OF
RECONCILIATION**

**JEWISH PEACE
FELLOWSHIP**

**NEVADA DESERT
EXPERIENCE**

**NEW CALL TO
PEACEMAKING**

PAX CHRISTI

SOJOURNERS

**SOUTHERN CHRISTIAN
LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE**

WORLD PEACEMAKERS

**"Hear O Israel, the Lord our God,
the Lord is One."**

For the 40 years they wandered in the desert, Moses called on the people of Israel to remember this central tenet of their faith. To give the Hebrews guidance during this period of spiritual and physical wandering, the Lord gave them the Law. Prominent among the commandments handed down at Sinai were these two: "I am the Lord thy God. . . . Thou shalt have no other gods before me" and "Thou shalt not kill."

The uncertainty and harshness of the desert proved too much for the people of Israel. More than once they gave in to fear and fashioned gods of metal to make them feel secure.

For 40 years, the people of the United States have faced a similar temptation. Ever since the atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, we have increasingly placed our trust in weapons of mass destruction rather than in God.

The result of this misguided loyalty is all too apparent. Our country is lost in a spiritual desert every bit as barren as the wilderness of sand and heat in which the Hebrews wandered. Our faith in God's promises has faltered, leaving us ever more enslaved by the nuclear idols we have crafted.

God's patience and mercy gave the Hebrew people time to discover a way out of the desert by returning to faithfulness. Our hope for rescue from the nuclear demon lies along the same path. We are called to reject the bomb and place our trust in the God of life.

The time is at hand to make this choice. Forty years is long enough to wander. Embracing the Sinai covenant, we must now repent and return to the ways that make for peace.

We invite you to participate in that return on August 6-9, 1985, the 40th anniversary of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. These will be days on which to remember and days on which to act. Come join Christians, Jews, and other people of conscience on August 6-9, in a witness of nonviolent civil disobedience at a place where the dress rehearsal for nuclear war is going on today: the Nevada Nuclear Weapons Test Site.

All United States nuclear warhead tests are conducted at the Nevada Test Site. Nuclear weapons are regularly exploded there, underground, roughly once every 16-18 days.

The arms race cannot proceed unless nuclear bombs and delivery systems continue to be tested. A halt to all nuclear explosions is a logical, verifiable, and politically feasible first step toward a halt to all testing—including the testing of ballistic missiles and anti-satellite weapons.

During 1985, many arms control and disarmament organizations in the USA and abroad will be working to end nuclear testing. The August witness at the Nevada Test Site will add a direct action component to this broader campaign.

Even after the four decades of our wandering in the desert of nuclear idolatry, God still