



Victim Offender Reconciliation Program of the Central Valley, Inc  
4882 E. Townsend Ave. Fresno, CA 93727  
phone (559) 455-9803 fax (559) 252-4800 <http://vorp.org>

## Sustaining Friends

Our mission statement describes that VORP encourages and assists the churches in their mission of providing an invitation to and opportunity for peacemaking. VORP provides churches with the opportunity for them to fulfill their biblical mandate for doing justice. VORP also needs the help of the church. Sustaining Friends is a program we have developed to formalize our relationship with Christian churches. Together, VORP and Sustaining Friend churches are peacemakers in Fresno County. Together we are bringing the healing spirit of Jesus Christ to those who are hurt and torn by crime. Sustaining Friend churches are a central part of who we are.

Fresno VORP has 15 Sustaining Friend churches supporting it through prayer, volunteers, finances, and use of their buildings for mediations and trainings. In Fresno there are approximately 400 Christian churches and our goal is that all Christian churches will become Sustaining Friends of VORP.

### VORP'S CURRENT SUSTAINING FRIENDS

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <b>Baptist Temple Church</b><br>Pastor Tom Sims              | <b>Bethany MB</b><br>Pastor Rick Bartlett                        | <b>College Community MB</b><br>Pastor Bill Braun     |
| <b>College Church of Christ</b><br>Pastor Doug Baker         | <b>First Baptist Kingsburg</b><br>Pastor Jim Collins             | <b>First Mennonite Church</b><br>Pastor Steve Penner |
| <b>Mennonite Community</b><br>Pastor Steve Ratzlaff          | <b>New Hope Community Church</b><br>Rev. Tim Rolen               |  |
| <b>North Fresno MB</b><br>Pastor James Bergan                | <b>St. Anthony of Padua</b><br>Monseigneur Wenzinger             | <b>St. Paul Newman Center</b><br>Deacon John Supino  |
| <b>United Christian Church</b><br>Pastor Natalie Chamberlain | <b>United Japanese Christian Church</b><br>Rev. Kirsten Marshall |  |
| <b>Wesley United Methodist</b><br>Rev. Vicki Armour Healy    | <b>Westside Church of God</b><br>Pastor Paul Binion              |  |

**A big THANK YOU to all of our Sustaining Friends, we could not do it without your prayers and support. We thank God for your partnership and your commitment to making a difference in our community!**

#### \* Don't see your church on this list, but would like to?

If you are interested in seeing your church become a Sustaining Friend of VORP please call (559) 455-9803 to speak to Derek Geitner, our Sustaining Friends Coordinator (see his bio below and comments on the other side).

**Derek Geitner** hails from Brights Grove, Ontario, Canada. He was a member of Scott St. MB church in St. Catharines, ON, came to Fresno in 2001, and earned an MA in theology at MBBS. He is currently working on an MDiv and interning as a chaplain. He intends to graduate in 2011. Before beginning work at VORP as the Sustaining Friends Coordinator, Derek worked as an adjunct professor at Fresno City College in the Letters Department, teaching philosophy, religion and critical thinking. In his spare time, he enjoys hiking, camping, and playing the guitar.

#### VORP Board

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Derek Geitner,  
Sustaining Friends  
Coordinator

#### Center for Peacemaking Staff

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Holly McFarlin,  
Administrator

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VORP Webmaster

#### VORP Mediator Training

August 7th

September 10th - 11th

October 22nd -23rd

November 13th

Call (559) 455-9803 for reservations or check out our website for more information: <http://vorp.org/training.shtml>

All trainings held at Fresno Pacific University

## Sustaining Friends Coordinator: Derek Geitner

It is good to see that VORP is able to get involved with issues involving younger children and teenagers. The mediation process involves drawing what is good out of people, as well as acting as a mirror for the offender to become conscious of his or her mistakes. One of the first VORP cases that I sat in on involved a young man who had become involved in graffiti and tagging. In this case, the mediator was able to connect with the offender and help him to realize what he had done wrong. The young man felt regret for his actions and willingly took part in the mediation process. He would later begin to obey his curfew and stay away from those who had drawn him into the crime of graffiti. He began community service at the SPCA and was enjoying it. This case seems to have been quite successful, especially when one can see that an offender is making efforts at making a change in their behavior.

Sometimes VORP and CJC cases require more effort to come to a close. They involve a lot of work in tracking

people and organizing meetings. I attended a CJC meeting with a young woman who had been involved in a fight at school. The mediator I was with was knowledgeable and was able to get the offender interested in taking part in the restorative justice process. The meeting with the young woman and her family was an interesting experience – the mother sat down with us at their kitchen table and the process was explained to her daughter. She seemed to be compliant and willing to carry the process through. However this case had to be closed because the victim was not willing to participate. It is difficult to see that VORP and CJC mediators put a lot of time and effort into a case, and a vital link in the case may be missing such as nonparticipation by a particular member of the case, and the case does not come to a mediation. Overall, though, after a crime is committed, it seems that generally, VORP and CJC mediators are effective in getting offenders interested in working to restore the damage and correct what they have done in the past.



Get the word out about VORP just by wearing the shirt and help support one of your favorite organizations! Check out the color view on our website: <http://vorp.org/support.shtml>

You can purchase them for a donation of \$15 either at the office or online at the VORP website through PayPal with the option for shipping straight to your home. We have pink and blue printing both available on a navy t-shirt and sizes range from Small - 2 XL.

Please specify color and size.

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## Set up an online monthly donation account – Get a FREE VORP T-Shirt!

VORP Donations can now be made online and can also be set for monthly donations! **If you set up a monthly online giving account you will be sent a VORP T-shirt FREE of charge.** Go to <http://VORP.org> and click the blue donation button powered through Razoo. The organization Razoo is funded by a foundation which pays for all transaction fees, so ALL of your money comes straight to VORP, whereas other providers charge a service fee. Please consider making a monthly donation. Once you set up your account you can choose to donate monthly automatically and the website will charge your credit card on a specified monthly date. This way you don't have to write a check or pay for postage. The website will automatically produce a donation receipt so you will get confirmation immediately as well as have the receipt on file for your taxes. **If you like simplicity, the internet, and donating to VORP nothing could be better! Check out the website today and sign-up!** If you have any questions please feel free to contact our office.

[HTTP://VORP.ORG](http://VORP.ORG)

(559) 455-9803

FRESNO, CA 93727

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OF THE CENTRAL VALLEY INC.

VICTIM OFFENDER RECONCILIATION PROGRAM



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