



## *Memphis Peace and Harmony Days – September 21-23, 2011*

**For Immediate Release**

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## **Celebrate Memphis Peace and Harmony Days Wednesday through Friday, September 21-23, 2011.**

**History:** In 2002, the United Nations General Assembly permanently adopted September 21st as the International Day of Peace. On September 22 and 23, 2009, His Holiness the Dalai Lama visited Memphis, Tennessee and on September 23, 2009, received the International Freedom Award from the National Civil Rights Museum in Memphis. During his two day visit he gave a public talk on "Developing Peace and Harmony." Memphis political leaders declared September 22 and 23 Memphis Peace and Harmony Days.

At that time the Founder of Pema Karpo Meditation Center, Khenpo Gawang Rinpoche, made a commitment to honor the visit of His Holiness by creating an annual festival of peace and harmony. Memphis Peace and Harmony Days' purpose is to cultivate peacefulness within individuals so families, societies, nations and ultimately the world can live harmoniously. The first annual Memphis Peace and Harmony Days was celebrated in 2010 from September 21-23.

[The Celebration on September 21-23, 2011 in Memphis:](#) People of Memphis, Shelby County, the United States, and around the world will gather to observe the Second Annual Memphis Peace and Harmony Days from Wednesday through Friday, September 21-23, 2011. Memphis Peace and Harmony Days will begin on September 21, 2011 by honoring the United Nations' International Day of Peace with an interfaith panel. Speakers will address the practice of peace in the Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Native American, Hindu, and Buddhist traditions. A period of silent meditation/contemplation/prayer for peace will follow, led by Khenpo Gawang Rinpoche, Buddhist monk and scholar, and Founder of Pema Karpo Meditation Center. A candle lighting ceremony will end the evening, signifying taking the light of peace and spreading it into the world. The event will be held at the PhoDa Temple located at 3943 Frayser-Raleigh Road, Memphis, TN 38128 from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM. People anywhere in the world can attend online by going to [www.memphispeaceandharmony.org](http://www.memphispeaceandharmony.org), clicking the "Connect Online" link and following the instructions.

On September 22, 2011, prayers for peace from the Tibetan Buddhist tradition will be led by Khenpo Gawang Rinpoche. Following the prayers, he will speak about developing individual peacefulness. The featured prayer is written by His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Prayers will be chanted in English -- all are welcome. This event will be held at the Pema Karpo Meditation Center, 3912 Frayser-Raleigh Road, Memphis, TN 38128 from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM. People anywhere in the world can attend online by going to [www.memphispeaceandharmony.org](http://www.memphispeaceandharmony.org), clicking the "Connect Online" link and following the instructions.

On September 23, 2011, a mindful peace walk will be held at Sleepy Hollow Park in Bartlett, Tennessee starting at 7:00 PM. The walk will be led by Khenpo Gawang Rinpoche. A map to the park can be found at <http://communitylink.com/us/tn/bartlett/map/city>.

At any time during September 21- 23, 2011, anyone can create activities that promote calm and peace within themselves and share them on our Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/MemphisPeaceAndHarmonyDays](http://www.facebook.com/MemphisPeaceAndHarmonyDays). Some examples of activities anyone can do include baking bread mindfully, sitting calmly in nature, praying for peace, sitting in a public area and wishing good for all who pass, or helping someone who needs it. Let's collect all the ways that Memphis does peace!

### [What People are Saying About Memphis Peace and Harmony Days:](#)

Khenpo Gawang Rinpoche, Buddhist monk and scholar says, "*Peace starts in an individual's heart. First we need a peaceful mind; then a peaceful family, city, country, and world. Peace removes suffering and brings happiness. This we all need. I recommend that you don't wait but BE HAPPY NOW.*"

Memphis Peace and Harmony Days will capture the compassionate words and intention of His Holiness the Dalai Lama: *"We can never obtain peace in the world if we neglect the inner world and don't make peace with ourselves. World peace must develop out of inner peace. Without inner peace it is impossible to achieve world peace, external peace. Weapons themselves do not act. They have not come out of the blue. Man has made them. But even given those weapons, those terrible weapons, they cannot act by themselves. As long as they are left alone in storage they cannot do any harm."* [The Dalai Lama](#)

His Holiness imparts this advice: *"Through training our minds we can become more peaceful. This will give us greater opportunities for creating the peaceful families and human communities that are the foundation of world peace."*

Candia Ludy, Executive Director of Pema Karpo Meditation Center, reflects, *"I feel the place to start is by saying again and again to ourselves and aloud to others, "I believe world peace is possible". When world peace starts to feel possible we can begin asking, 'what can I do?' The answer will come peacefully in many ways and many forms."*

On the 20th anniversary of The International Day of Peace in 2002, The U.N. Resolution UN/A/RES/55/282 (<http://www.un-documents.net/a55r282.htm>) officially established September 21 as the permanent date for the International Day of Peace. By setting a fixed date for The International Day of Peace, the General Assembly concluded that, *"(The International Day of Peace) offers a cessation of violence and conflict throughout the world, and the related importance of achieving the broadest possible awareness and observance of the International Day of Peace among the global community."*

April Pilkington, a native Memphian, is planning to attend Memphis Peace and Harmony Days. She states, *"Peace is possible. Memphis Peace and Harmony Days is our way to help everyone know they can develop peace in themselves so it will spread out into the world."*

To find out more about Memphis Peace and Harmony Days, visit [www.memphispeaceandharmony.org](http://www.memphispeaceandharmony.org).

### **About the Sponsoring Organization:**

**Pema Karpo Meditation Center** is a meditation center inspired and guided by teacher Khenpo Gawang Rinpoche who is a Tibetan Buddhist scholar, monastic, and meditation teacher. The center's primary purpose is to use ancient Tibetan Buddhist wisdom to eliminate the troubles of the world through meditation, teachings, retreats, community service and outreach projects, and translation and publication of ancient Tibetan Buddhist texts.

(END)

### **Note to Press:**

For supporting materials to use with this news release, contact Debbie Burch at [debbie@memphispeaceandharmony.org](mailto:debbie@memphispeaceandharmony.org).