

## MVC TO HOLD SECOND ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE CELEBRATION

*Presbyterian minister and author Rev. Benjamin Weir to discuss experience of being held as a hostage in Beirut while serving as a missionary.*

**Marshall, Mo.** (July 25, 2006)—Presbyterian minister Reverend Benjamin Weir will present “*A Christian-Muslim Conversation*” at Missouri Valley College’s Second Annual International Day of Peace celebration on Wednesday, September 20 in the Eckilson-Mabee Theatre on the MVC campus.

Rev. Weir’s presentation is in honor of the Second Annual International Day of Peace, which is every year on September 21 and was established by the United Nations in 1981. The purpose is to provide an opportunity for individuals, organizations and nations to create practical acts of Peace on a shared date, according to the Web site.

Rev. Weir was kidnapped in Beirut, Lebanon on May 8, 1984 by the Islamic Jihad, a terrorist group. Weir was held for 16 months—15 of them in solitary confinement. Six other American’s, including Associated Press writer Terry Anderson, were held with him and released later.

Rev. Tim Kiser, MVC religion professor and director of spiritual life, said that Weir’s story is truly inspirational.

“Held in solitary confinement and his Bible taken away from him, he states that which gave him hope everyday was to recite every biblical passage that he knew by heart,” Kiser said. “He sang every hymn that he recalled and prayed often. He faced great threats daily and held to his faith. We all can learn from such an example though many of us will never face such a test—emotionally or spiritually.”

Before the kidnapping, Weir was a missionary and a teacher at the Near East School of Theology for nearly three decades. Since his release, Weir has been a voice of reconciliation and tolerance through his various positions in the Presbyterian Church.

Weir is also the author of the book, *Hostage Bound, Hostage Free*. In his book, Weir reflects on the clash of faith between himself and his Muslim captors.

The day’s events begin with registration at 8 a.m. followed by Rev. Weir’s presentation. Lunch is available at Covenant Presbyterian Church. A dialogue session with Rev. Weir will take place from 1:30 to 4:30 p.m.

The cost to attend is \$25 (with lunch) and \$20 (without lunch) and registration forms are available at [www.moval.edu/campusministry](http://www.moval.edu/campusministry). The registration deadline is Friday, September 8, 2006 and seats are limited.

For more information about MVC's Second Annual International Day of Peace celebration or for reservations, call Rev. Tim Kiser at (660) 831-4142 or visit <http://www.internationaldayofpeace.org/peaceday/missouri/index.htm>. For more information about Rev. Weir, visit <http://www.washington-report.org/backissues/1286/8612020.html>.