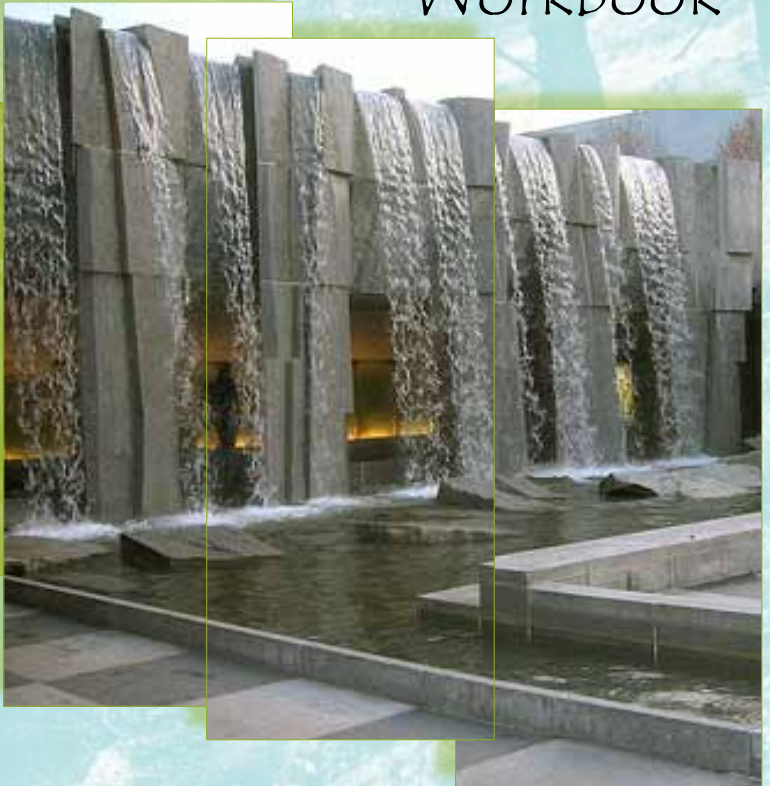




Becoming and Being a Peace with Justice Covenant Congregation

Workbook



On Becoming & Being a Peace with Justice Covenant Congregation

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	4
Step 1: Start the Process	7
Step 2: Establish Connections	34
Step 3: Identify and Prioritize Issues.....	48
Step 4: Develop a Method to Introduce the Program.....	54
Step 5: Design an Action Plan	58
Step 6: Become a Covenant Congregation	63
Step 7: Celebrate the Covenant	64
Step 8: Be Who You Say You Are.....	75
Appendix	76
The 1908 Social Creed	78
The United Methodist Social Creed (1972)	79
Social Creed Companion Litany.....	80
Peace with Justice Sunday Worship Aids.....	81

Introduction

The Peace with Justice Covenant Congregation Program aims to make shalom — a word of greeting or farewell meaning peace — visible and active in people's lives and communities. The General Conference assigned The General Board of Church & Society to put into service the program and called the denomination to "strengthen its capacity to act as a public advocate" in communities and nations throughout the world.

An overview
from the General Board of Church & Society

What you can do

Beginning the process



An overview from the General Board of Church & Society

The Old Testament speaks of God's sovereignty in terms of covenant, more particularly the "covenant of peace" with Israel, which binds people to God's shalom (Isaiah 54:10; Ezekiel 37:20). In the covenant of shalom, there is no contradiction between justice and peace or between peace and security or between love and justice (Jeremiah 29:7). In Isaiah's prophecy, when "the spirit is poured upon us from on high," we will know that these laws of God are one and indivisible.

What you can do

You can engage and be empowered by taking action on and learning about peace with justice issues through education, grass roots campaigns and legislative advocacy. Network action is targeted at ending war and crises in places such as Darfur and Haiti, stopping new nuclear weapons, and supporting legislation and campaigns to overcome global poverty, health-care reform and hunger.

Becoming a Peace with Justice Covenant Congregation is to witness to God's demand for a faithful, just, disarmed and secure world through:

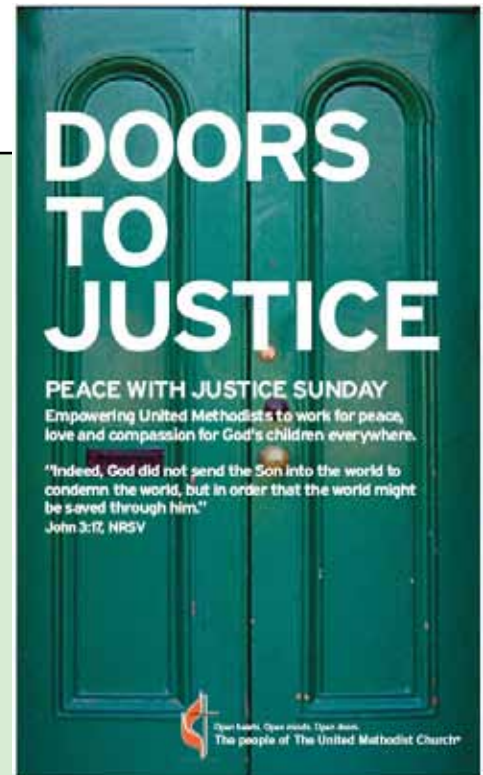
- Approaching issues of peace with justice from the perspective of the teachings of Jesus Christ,
- Evoking full and fair discussion of these issues within the local church, and

- Engaging the congregation in ongoing actions that work for peace.

Beginning the process

Congregations across the United Methodist connection implement the Peace with Justice Covenant Congregation Program in a wide variety of ways. Some churches become a Peace with Justice Covenant Congregation in a relatively short time. Others choose to move more slowly through the process to ensure that they are completely comfortable with this call to covenant. There is no right or wrong way.

All congregations are urged to spend time reviewing the contents of this workbook. They are urged to engage in study, dialogue and action relating to the major issues threaten-



Peace with Justice Sunday

Peace with Justice Sunday usually takes place the first Sunday after Pentecost, although congregations may celebrate the Special Sunday any time during the year.

Pentecost celebrates the outpouring of the Holy Spirit calling for God's shalom. Peace with Justice witnesses to God's demand for a faithful, just, disarmed and secure world (§263.5, *The Book of Discipline* 2008).

Contributions enable United Methodists to work for peace, love and compassion for God's children everywhere.

Contributions support work in annual conferences and around the world.

On Becoming & Being a Peace with Justice Covenant Congregation



ing human survival in our time. These include root causes of war and the global disparity between the rich and the poor. Congregations are also urged to work with ecumenical and interfaith coalitions in the common quest for peace with justice.

The workbook suggests eight steps for beginning the journey. They are the following:

Step 1 — Organizing a small group and starting the process

Step 2 — Establishing connections

Step 3 — Identifying and prioritizing a list of issues

Step 4 — Develop a method to introduce the program to your congregation

Step 5 — Design proposed action place

Step 6 — Adopt the Covenant Congregation program

Step 7 — Celebrate the Covenant

Step 8 — Continue to be who you say you are

After spending time reviewing the content of the workbook, a local church or a group within the congregation develops a specific plan of action. Bible study, reflection and discernment undergird this process.

During the initial planning period, the Peace with Justice Coordinator is available to serve as a resource or help structure specific programs or projects. Grants may be available from your Annual Conference or the General Board of Church & Society to cover initial out-of-pocket planning expenses. Funding for additional program or projects is available on a case-by-case basis through funds generated from the annual churchwide Peace with Justice Special Sunday offering.

At the conclusion of a Peace with Justice Covenant Congregation exploration process, the local congregation covenants to:

- Continue to approach issues of peace with justice from the perspective of the teachings of Jesus Christ;
- Engage in ongoing action to remedy those manifestations of sin and evil in individuals, systems and structures that stand in the way of God's shalom; and,
- Participate in a yearly celebration of the Peace with Justice Special Sunday.

For more information, contact your Conference Peace with Justice Coordinator.

And the badlands desert grows crops and the fertile fields become forests. Justice will move into the badlands desert. Right will build a home in the fertile field. And where there's Right, there'll be Peace and the progeny of Right: quiet lives and endless trust. My people will live in a peaceful neighborhood — in safe houses, in quiet gardens.

—The Message

Step 1: Start the Process

Implementing Step One is foundational to the process of becoming and being a Peace with Justice Covenant Congregation

Organize a group

Engage the group
in a Peace with Justice
Bible study

Arrive at a mutual
understanding
of word meanings

Investigate United
Methodist statements
regarding Peace
with Justice



On Becoming & Being a Peace with Justice Covenant Congregation

Organize a group

Assess the level of your congregation's previous involvement in peace with justice issues.

Present an overview of the Covenant Congregation Program to an existing or newly formed small group within your congregation.

Obtain commitment from your group to begin the process.

Keep your pastor informed about what you are doing.

Engage in a Peace with Justice Bible study

Pace, according to the Bible, cannot be sustained without justice prevailing. Involve your group in a peace with justice Bible study. Compare and discuss the connection between "peace" and "justice." Do they interrelate? Depend upon each other? Contradict one another?



Arrive at mutual understanding of word meanings

Come to a mutual understanding of the meaning of words such as peace, war, justice, charity, mercy, revenge, judgment, shalom, shanty, salaam, righteousness. Learn to recognize the biblical language of peace with justice.

Investigate United Methodist statements on Peace with Justice

I was hungry and you fed me.

I was thirsty and you gave me a drink.

I was homeless and you gave me a room.

I was shivering and you gave me clothes.

I was sick and you stopped to visit.

I was in prison and you came to me.

—Matthew 25:35–36

Become familiar with what your own United Methodist Church has to say about:

- War and peace
- Nuclear and conventional disarmament
- Democracy and freedom
- World trade and economic development
- Military conscription
- Training and service
- Peace research
- Education and action
- The United Nations

You can find these in the Social Principles (§160-165) in the *Book of Discipline* and/or the *Book of Resolutions*.

Investigate United Methodist statements

At the Roots of Methodism: Wesley abhorred the 'curse' of war

by John Singleton

(This article on Methodist history was prepared especially for distribution by United Methodist News Service. Singleton, a writer with the weekly *Methodist Recorder* in London, is administrator for the Methodist churches and social projects in the Tower Hamlets area of East London. See http://gbgm-umc.org/global_news/full_article.cfm?articleid=1437.)

Methodism's witness for peace and social justice in these troubled times is an imperative of the Gospel — just as it was for John Wesley, the founder of the movement, in his own day.

At a time when there seemed to be no alternative to the use of the sword in solving international disputes — and with only a handful of Quakers crying in the wilderness — Wesley actually spoke out strongly against what he saw as the sheer folly of war. Although he could not be described as a pacifist, he nevertheless believed war to be the “foulest curse” on the face of humanity. He described it as the denial — even the crucifixion — of all the higher attributes of civilization; it was nothing short of rebellion against humanity and God.

“War is a horrid reproach to the Christian name — yea, to the name of man, to all reason and humanity,” said Wesley. And when war broke out, he added, God was forgotten. “So long as this monster stalks uncontrolled, where is reason, virtue, humanity? They are utterly excluded,” he said.

In 1758, the Seven Years' War being then at full tide — with France and Austria fighting England and Prussia — the Wesley brothers, John and Charles, published their “Hymns of Intercession for all Mankind.” The following lines reflect their viewpoint of armed conflict: “Our earth we now lament to see,/With floods of wickedness o'erflowed./Where men, like fiends, each other tear,/In all the hellish rage of war.”

In 1759, Wesley walked to Knowle, near

Bristol, to see a company of French prisoners from the Seven Years' War. “About 1,100 of them, we are informed, were confined in that little place, without anything to lie on but a little dirty straw, or anything to cover them but a few foul, thin rags, [whether] by day or night ...,” he reported. “I was much affected and preached in the evening on ‘Thou shalt not oppress a stranger; for ye know the

John Wesley on War

The Inhuman Folly of War

But there is still greater and more undeniable proof that the very foundations of all things are utterly out of course in the Christian

as well as the heathen world. There is a still more horrid reproach to the Christian name, yea, to the name of man, to all reason and humanity. There is war in the world!

War between men! War between Christians! I mean, between those that bear the name of Christ, and profess to “walk as he also walked.” Now, who can reconcile war, I will not say to religion, but to any degree of reason or common sense?

—from “Doctrine on Original Sin” 1762



On Becoming & Being a Peace with Justice Covenant Congregation

heart of a stranger, seeing ye were strangers in the land of Egypt” (Exodus 23:9).

Wesley then set about raising money with which to purchase linen and wool cloth to make into clothes, which were then distributed to the prisoners-of-war in greatest need. It wasn't long before the city of Bristol's governing body contributed a large quantity of mattresses and blankets, and then gifts began to flow in from other parts of Britain as well. The Methodists had started a chain reaction of compassion.

Later, when trouble with the American colonies escalated, Wesley wrote to Thomas Rankin and some of his other preachers in America,

imploping them to use their influence for peace. In 1776, when the revolutionary war was at its height, Wesley wrote his “Seasonable Address to the More Serious Part of the Inhabitants of Great Britain Respecting the Unhappy Contest Between Us and Our American Brethren.”



That treatise portrays vividly Wesley's utter abhorrence of war.

Picturing the armies rushing against each other in conflict, he asked: “But what are they going to do? To shoot each other through the head or heart, to stab and butcher each other? ... Why so? What harm have they done to each other? Why, none at all. Most of them are entire strangers to each other. But a matter is in dispute relative to the mode of taxation. So these countrymen, children of the same parents, are to murder each other with all possible haste — to prove who is right. What an argument is this! What a method of proof! What an amazing way of deciding controversies!”

Then, suggesting impartial arbitration instead of bloodshed, he inquires: “Are there no wise men among us? None that are able to judge between brethren? But brother goeth to war against brother, and that in the very sight of the heathen. Surely this is a sore evil among us? How is wisdom perished from the wise! What a flood of folly and madness has broke in upon us!”

One thing was for sure: Wesley was not the kind of person who proffered advice from afar without being prepared to put it into practice himself. He consistently urged the early Methodists not to retaliate in the face of mob intimidation, and when under attack personally, he always sought to maintain a peaceable and nonviolent demeanor. In his journal, he cited an incident — one of many — that occurred in 1743, while he was on a preaching tour in the west of England.

“The mob of the town burst into the room and created much disturbance; roaring and striking those that stood in the way as though Legion himself possessed them,” he wrote. “I would fain have persuaded our people to stand still; but the zeal of some and the fear of others had no ears; so that finding the uproar increase I went into the midst and brought the head of the mob up with me to the desk. I received but one blow on the side of the head, after which we reasoned the case till he grew milder and milder and at length undertook to quiet his companions.”

As the war clouds continue to gather and many people across the world speak up for peace, Methodists can take heart from Wesley. And as the arrival of asylum seekers from poorer countries continues to confront governments and churches with hard choices about human lives, we can remember how Wesley was a friend to the stranger in his land.

The Methodist people are, after all, said to be the friend of all and the enemy of none.

United Methodists on War and Just-Peace Principles

(Taken from an article by Bishop C. Dale White originally appearing in *Response* magazine. White served as bishop in the New Jersey and New York areas from 1976-1992. In retirement he is serving as co-pastor of St. Paul's United Methodist Church in Newport, R.I. He is a former director of the Women's Division and the General Board of Global Ministries.)



United Methodists have been ambivalent about war from our beginnings. Throughout the warring 20th Century, The United Methodist Church demonstrated its diversity as it offered support and counsel to men and women who believe it is their duty to participate in the military, while at the same time supporting conscientious objectors in their plea to do alternative service. There are three major strains of thought in our denomination:

Pacifist tradition

For the first four centuries of Christendom, Christians were mainly pacifists. They refused to participate in all killing, military service and warfare. Their scriptural seriousness, their closeness to Jesus and the Apostles, and their heroic willingness to go even to death for their convictions, has been an inspiration to Christians since. Even after Christianity became the state religion of the Roman Empire under Constantine, pacifist groups remained. The embodiment of peace and the prayers for peace of St. Francis of Assisi have inspired Christians for centuries. The Protestant Reformation gave rise to the Mennonites, the Church of the Brethren and the Quakers — peace churches.

A strain of pacifism has continued in Methodism. The founder of the Methodist movement, John Wesley, condemned all war as the prime example of human depravity. Many prominent leaders of our denomination in the 20th century were pacifists. For decades the legislative body of United Methodism, the General Conference, had taken an essentially pacifist stance. The Social Principles, paragraph 69C in *The 1996 Book of*

Discipline of The United Methodist Church, said: “We believe war is incompatible with the teachings and example of Christ. We therefore reject war as an instrument of national foreign policy and insist that the first moral duty of all nations is to resolve by peaceful means every dispute that arises between or among them.”

Pacifism has survived in nonviolent strategies of social change, civilian defense and conflict resolution in which United Methodists have been involved: Mahatma Gandhi's “soul force” movement that brought independence to India; demonstrations and civil disobedience to bring civil rights to African Americans led by the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.; the Nuclear Freeze Campaign and other protests against the nuclear-arms buildup; and the anti-apartheid struggle.

Just-war tradition

Among Roman Catholics from the time of St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas, a just-war tradition has flourished. Its principles, which place strict controls over any resort to war, include:

Just cause: A decision for war must seek justice in response to serious evil, like aggression.

On Becoming & Being a Peace with Justice Covenant Congregation

Just intent: The ends sought in a decision for war must mean the restoration of peace with justice, and must not seek self-enrichment or devastation of another nation.

Last resort: Like pacifism, this tradition is based on a strong moral presumption against going to war. Every possibility of peaceful settlement of a conflict must be tried first.

Legitimate authority: A decision for war may be declared only by properly constituted governmental authority.

Reasonable hope of success: A decision for war must be based on a prudent expectation that the ends sought can be achieved.

If war should break out, it must be constrained by two principles:

Discrimination: Justice in the conduct of war requires respect for the rights of enemy peoples, and immunity of noncombatants from direct attack. Such respect also rules out atrocities, reprisals, looting and wanton violence.

Proportionality: The amount of damage inflicted must be proportionate to the ends sought. Small-scale injuries should not be avenged by massive suffering, death and devastation. The war's harm must not exceed the war's good.

The 2000 General Conference, after vigorous debate, for the first time in the history of Methodism acknowledged most Christians accept the just-war doctrine. The Social Principles, ¶165C (previously ¶69C) in *The 2000 Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church* say: "We therefore reject war as the usual instrument of national policy."

Under conditions of modern warfare, just-war standards are difficult to maintain. World War II rapidly escalated into wholesale attacks upon cities. Hundreds of thousands of noncombatants were killed.

In the light of just-war principles, the 2000 General Conference condemned nuclear weapons: "We reaffirm the finding that nuclear weapons, whether used or threatened, are grossly evil and morally wrong."

Along with major religious bodies of the world and growing numbers of senior military officers, research scientists and engineers who created the bombs, global medical groups, and the World Court, The United Methodist Church — using the words of the Council of Bishops' 1968 study "In Defense of Creation" — said, "a clear and unconditioned 'No' to nuclear war and any use of nuclear weapons."

The crusade tradition

The fusion of political and religious authority in the Middle Ages fostered a third Christian tradition in matters of war and peace: crusades against infidels. The capture of Jerusalem's holy places by the Turks at the end of the 11th century was cited to make warfare a holy cause and a path to sainthood. Unlike the pacifist and just-war traditions, the crusade tradition assumes unrestrained conduct of war is a religious obligation.

If crusade tradition seems a relic of past centuries, look at the excess of self-righteousness and barbarism with which most modern wars have been waged. Moral restraints have been overwhelmed. Nations and warring groups have used poison gas, fire raids, nuclear weapons and napalm against civilians and military personnel.



For decades, some religious groups promoted a nuclear-arms buildup and a militantly anti-Soviet foreign policy, with emphasis on atheistic communism as the enemy of the faith. President George W. Bush called the planned actions against terrorism a crusade, until warned by staff that the word is offensive to Muslims.

Toward a just peace

Limitations of just-war and crusade traditions have led United Methodists and ecumenical partners to begin to formulate principles of a just peace. Just-war principles, fragile as they are, are vital to observe if war is imminent or under way.

A Christian's calling is to be a committed peacemaker day after day, year after year, remembering Jesus blessed the peacemakers. Just-peace principles under discussion include such things as:

(1) Peacemaking is a sacred calling of the Gospel, blessed by God, making us evangelists of shalom-peace that is overflowing with justice, compassion and well-being.

(2) Government is a natural institution of human community in God's creation and a requirement for the restraint of human evil. Every policy of government must be an act of justice and must be measured by its impact on the poor, the weak and the oppressed.

The transformation of the conflict-ridden nation-state system into a new world order of common security in interdependent institutions such as the United Nations offers the only practical hope for enduring peace. Security is not only a legitimate concern but an imperative responsibility of governments for the protection of life and well-

being. The security of which biblical prophets speak cannot be separated from moral imperatives of justice and peace and the full range of basic human needs.

All Christians — pacifists and non-pacifists — ought to share a strong moral presumption against violence, killing and warfare, seeking every possible means of peaceful conflict resolution. The Gospel command to love your enemies is more than a benevolent ideal. It is essential to our well-being and survival.

Every person of every race and nation is a sacred being, made in God's image, entitled to full participation in the

shalom of God's good Creation.

Peacemaking in the nuclear age, under the sovereignty of the Creator God, requires the defense of Creation itself against possible assaults that may be rationalized in the name of national defense.

The church of Jesus Christ, in the power and unity of the Holy Spirit, is called to serve as an alternative community to an alienated and fractured world: a loving and peaceable international company of disciples transcending all governments, races and ideologies; reaching out to all enemies; and ministering to all victims of poverty and oppression.



Current United Methodist statements regarding Peace with Justice

Every four years, delegates at General Conference revise the Book of Discipline and the Book of Resolutions. The Social Principles, in both books, are described as a “prayerful and thoughtful effort on the part of the General Conference to speak to the human issues in the contemporary world from a sound biblical and theological foundation as historically demonstrated in United Methodist traditions.” The Book of Resolutions is not legally binding but serves as a guide for the church for reference, encouragement, study and support.

War and Peace

We believe war is incompatible with the teachings and example of Christ. We therefore reject war as a instrument of national foreign policy, to be employed only as a last resort in the prevention of such evils as genocide, brutal suppression of human rights, and unprovoked international aggression.

We insist that the first moral duty of all nations is to resolve by peaceful means every dispute that arises between or among them; that human values must outweigh military claims as governments determine their priorities; that the militarization of society must be challenged and stopped; that the manufacture, sale and deployment of armaments must be reduced and controlled; and that the production, possession or use of nuclear weapons be condemned. Consequently, we endorse general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international controls.

¶165C *The Book of Discipline* 2008

Military service

We deplore war and urge the peaceful settlement of all disputes among nations.

From the beginning, the Christian conscience has struggled with the harsh realities of violence and war, for these evils clearly frustrate God’s loving purposes for humankind. We yearn for the day when there will be no more war and people will live together in peace and justice.

Some of us believe that war and other acts of violence are never acceptable to Christians. We also acknowledge that many Christians believe that, when peaceful alternatives have failed, the force of arms may regretfully be preferable to unchecked aggression, tyranny and genocide.

We honor the witness of pacifists who will not allow us to become complacent about war and violence. We also respect those who support the use of force, but only in extreme situations and only when the need is clear beyond reasonable doubt, and through appropriate international organizations. We urge the establishment of the rule of law in international affairs as a means of elimination of war, violence and coercion in these affairs.

We reject national policies of enforced military service as incompatible with the gospel. We acknowledge the agonizing tension created by the demand for military service by national

governments. We urge all young adults to seek the counsel of the church as they reach a conscientious decision concerning the nature of their responsibility as citizens. Pastors are called upon to be available for counseling with all young adults who face conscription, including those who conscientiously refuse to cooperate with a system of conscription.

We support and extend the ministry of the church to those persons who conscientiously oppose all war, or any particular war, and who therefore refuse to serve in the armed forces or to cooperate with the systems of military conscription. We also support and extend the church's ministry to those persons who conscientiously choose to serve in the armed forces or to accept alternative service.

¶ 164I *The Book of Discipline* 2008

United Methodist bishops call for peace

“Peace is not simply the absence of war, a nuclear stalemate or combination of uneasy cease-fires. It is that emerging dynamic reality envisioned by prophets where spears and swords give way to implements of peace (Isaiah 2:1-4); where historic antagonists dwell together in trust (Isaiah 11:4-11); and where righteousness and justice prevail. There will be no peace with justice until unselfish and informed life is structured into political processes and international arrangements” (*Bishops' Call for Peace and the Self-Development of Peoples*).

Interrelated concerns

The mission of Jesus Christ and his church is to serve all peoples regardless of their government,

Darkness cannot
drive out darkness;
only light can do that.
Hate cannot drive out hate;
only love can do that.

—Martin Luther King, Jr.



ideology, place of residence, or status. Surely the welfare of humanity is more important in God's sight than the power or even the continued existence of any state. Therefore, the church is called to look beyond human boundaries of nation, race, class, sex, political ideology, or economic theory and to proclaim the demands of social righteousness essential to peace.

The following are interrelated areas that must be dealt with concurrently in a quest for lasting peace in a world community.

Disarmament

The arms race goes on. The danger of a holocaust, however, remains as long as nations maintain nuclear weapons. Meanwhile, millions starve, and development stagnates. Again and again, regional tensions grow, conflicts erupt, and outside forces intervene to advance or protect their interests without regard to international law or human rights.

True priorities in national budgeting are distorted by present expenditures on weapons. Because of fear of unemployment, desire for profits, and contributions to the national balance



of payments, the arms industry engenders great political power. Arms-producing nations seek to create markets, then vie with one another to become champion among the arms merchants of the world. Food, health, social services, jobs, and education are vital to the welfare of nations. Yet their availability is constantly threatened by the overriding priority given by governments to what is called “defense.”

We support initiatives in every part of the world that move toward the goal of disarmament. This demands a radical reordering of priorities coupled with an effective system of international building, making and keeping peace.

The church must constantly keep that goal before peoples and governments. In particular, we support the abolition of nuclear weapons.

We affirm the prophetic position of our bishops who said in their statement *In Defense of Creation*:

“We say a clear and unconditional ‘No!’ to nuclear war and to any use of nuclear weapons. We conclude that nuclear deterrence is a position

that cannot receive the church’s blessing.”

Accordingly, we reject the possession of nuclear weapons as a permanent basis for securing and maintaining peace. Possession can no longer be tolerated, even as a temporary expedient.

We call upon all nations that possess nuclear weapons to renounce these vile instruments of mass destruction and to move expeditiously to dismantle all nuclear warheads and delivery vehicles. As a first step, we support all movement to ban the “first strike” policy from all North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) doctrine.

We support the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. We call upon all nations to become signatories of these important treaties and to abide by their provisions. At the same time, nations must provide for more secure control of weapons-grade nuclear materials. It is clear deterrence comes from international controls on materials from which bombs are made.

We support the concept of nuclear-free zones where governments or peoples in a specific region

band together to bar nuclear weapons from the area either by treaty or declaration. The United Methodist Church affirms its commitment to a nuclear-free Pacific. As Christian people committed to stewardship, justice, and peacemaking, we oppose and condemn the use of the Pacific for tests, storage and transportation of nuclear weapons and weapons-delivery systems, and the disposal of radioactive wastes.

We further affirm the right of all indigenous people to control their health and well-being.

Convention and the Biological Weapons Convention

World public opinion justly condemns the use of chemical or biological weapons. Governments must renounce the use of these particularly inhumane weapons as part of their national policy. We support universal application of the Chemical Weapons & the Biological Weapons Convention.

We support treaty efforts to ban the development, trade and use of weapons that are inhumane, are excessively injurious, and have indiscriminate effects. Such weapons include land mines, booby traps, weapons with non detectable fragments, incendiary weapons, and blinding laser weapons.

We call upon all nations to sign and abide by the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production & Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on their destruction.

We are also concerned about the use of inhumane

weapons by civilian or military police. Hollow-point (“dumdum”) or other bullets designed to maim are not acceptable weapons for use by civilian or military forces. We support measures that outlaw use of such weapons at all levels.

We affirm peoples’ movements directed to abolition of the tools of war. Governments must not impede public debate on this issue of universal concern.

Democracy and freedom

Millions of people still live under oppressive rule and various forms of exploitation. Millions more live under deplorable conditions of racial, sexual and class discrimination. In many countries, many persons, including Christians, are suffering repression, imprisonment, and torture as a result of their efforts to speak truth to power.

Action by governments to encourage liberation and economic justice is essential but must be supported by parallel action on the part of private citizens and institutions, including churches, if peaceful measures are to succeed.

Unless oppression and denial of basic human rights are ended, violence on an increasing scale will continue to erupt in many nations and may spread throughout the world. The human toll in such conflicts is enormous, for they result in new



It isn't enough to talk about peace. One must believe in it. And it isn't enough to believe in it. One must work at it.

—Eleanor Roosevelt

On Becoming & Being a Peace with Justice Covenant Congregation

oppression and further dehumanization. We are concerned for areas where oppression and discrimination take place. We, as United Methodists, must build the conditions for peace through development of confidence and trust between peoples and governments. We are unalterably opposed to those who instill hate in one group for another.

Governments or political factions must not use religious, class, racial or other differences as the means to achieve heinous political purposes. This concern extends to all situations where external commercial, industrial and military interests are related to national oligarchies that resist justice and liberation for the masses of people. It is essential that governments that support or condone these activities alter their policies to permit and enable people to achieve genuine self-determination.



We believe the United Nations and its agencies must be supported, strengthened, and improved.

The United Nations

International justice requires the participation and determination of all peoples. We are called to look beyond the “limited and competing boundaries of nation-states to the larger and more inclusive community of humanity” (*Bishops’ Call for Peace and the Self-Development of Peoples*).

There has been unprecedented international cooperation through the United Nations and its specialized agencies as they have worked to solve international problems of health, education and the welfare of people. The United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) is one of the agencies that has been successful in this area.

These achievements are to be commended. In other areas, however, political considerations have diminished the support needed for the United Nations to achieve its goals. Many nations, including the most powerful, participate in some programs only when such action does not interfere with their national advantage.

We believe the United Nations and its agencies must be supported, strengthened and improved. We recommend that Christians work for the following actions in their respective nations:

1. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is a standard of achievement for all peoples and nations. International covenants and conventions that seek to implement the declaration must be universally ratified.
2. Peace and world order require the development of an effective and enforceable framework of international law that provides protection for human rights and guarantees of justice for all people.
3. Greater use should be made of the International Court of Justice. Nations should remove any restrictions they have adopted that impair the court’s effective functioning.
4. The industrialized world must not dominate development agencies. We support efforts to make controlling bodies of such agencies more representative.

5. We support the development and strengthening of international agencies designed to help nations or peoples escape from domination by other nations or transnational enterprises.

6. Economic and political considerations greatly affect issues of food, energy, raw materials, and other commodities. We support efforts in the United Nations to achieve new levels of justice in the world economic order.

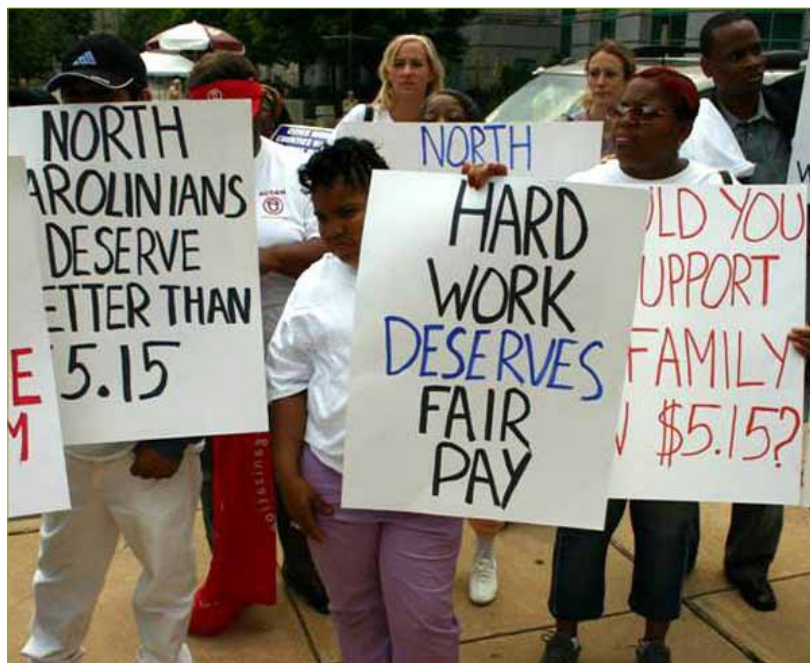
7. We support the concept of collective action against threats to peace. Wars fought in the search for justice might well be averted or diminished if the nations of the world would work vigorously and in concert to seek changes in oppressive political and economic systems.

World trade and economic development

The gap between rich and poor countries continues to widen. Human rights are denied when the surpluses of some arise in part as a result of continued deprivation of others. This growing inequity exists in our own communities and in all our nations. Our past efforts to alleviate these conditions have failed. Too often these efforts have been limited by our own unwillingness to act or have been frustrated by private interests and governments striving to protect the wealthy and the powerful.

In order to eliminate inequities in the control and distribution of the common goods of humanity, we are called to join the search for more just and equitable international economic structures and relationships. We seek a society that will assure all persons and nations the opportunity to achieve their maximum potential.

In working toward that purpose, we believe



these steps are needed:

1. Economic systems structured to cope with the needs of the world's peoples must be conceived and developed.
2. Measures that will free peoples and nations from reliance on financial arrangements that place them in economic bondage must be implemented.
3. Policies and practices for the exchange of commodities and raw materials that establish just prices and avoid damaging fluctuations in price must be developed.
4. Control of international monetary facilities must be more equitably shared by all the nations, including the needy and less powerful.
5. Agreements that affirm the common heritage principle that resources of the seabed, subsoil, outer space and those outside national jurisdiction are the heritage of humanity should be accepted by all nations.
6. Multilateral, rather than

Justice is truth
in action.

—Benjamin Disraeli

bilateral, assistance programs should be encouraged for secular as well as religious bodies. They must be designed to respond to the growing desire of the “developing world” to become self-reliant.

7. Nations that possess less military and economic power than others must be protected, through international agreements, from loss of control of their own resources and means of production to either transnational enterprises or other governments.

8. These international policies will not narrow the rich-poor gap within nations unless the

powerless poor are enabled to take control of their own political and economic destinies. We support people’s organizations designed to enable the discovery of local areas of exploitation and development of methods to alleviate these problems.

9. Economic and political turmoil within many developing nations has been promoted and used by other powers as an excuse to intervene through subversive activities or military force in furtherance of their own national interests. We condemn this version of imperialism that often parades as international responsibility.

10. We support the United Nations’ efforts to develop international law to govern the sea and to ensure that the world’s common resources will be used cooperatively and equitably for the welfare of humankind.

11. We urge the appropriate boards and agencies of The United Methodist Church to continue and expand efforts to bring about justice in cooperative action between peoples of all countries.

Military conscription, training and service

Conscription. We affirm our historic opposition to compulsory military training and service. We urge that military conscription laws be repealed; we also warn that elements of compulsion in any national service program will jeopardize seriously the service motive and introduce new forms of coercion into national life. We advocate and will continue to work for the inclusion of the abolition of military conscription in disarmament agreements.

Conscientious objection. Each person must face conscientiously the dilemmas of conscription, military training, and service and decide

The World Community

God’s world is one world. The unity now being thrust upon us by technological revolution has far outrun our moral and spiritual capacity to achieve a stable world. The enforced unity of humanity, increasingly evident on all levels of life, presents the church as well as all people with problems that will not wait for answer: injustice, war, exploitation, privilege, population, international ecological crisis, proliferation of arsenals of nuclear weapons, development of transnational business organizations that operate beyond the effective control of any governmental structure, and the increase of tyranny in all its forms. This generation must find viable answers to these and related questions if humanity is to continue on this earth. We commit ourselves as a church to the achievement of a world community that is a fellowship of persons who honestly love one another. We pledge ourselves to seek the meaning of the gospel in all issues that divide people and threaten the growth of world community.

—Social Principles of The United Methodist Church ¶165

his or her own responsible course of action. We affirm the historic statement: “What the Christian citizen may not do is to obey persons rather than God, or overlook the degree of compromise in even our best acts, or gloss over the sinfulness of war. The church must hold within its fellowship persons who sincerely differ at this point of critical decision, call all to repentance, mediate to all God’s mercy, minister to all in Christ’s name” (“The United Methodist Church & Peace,” 1968 General Conference).

Christian teaching supports conscientious objection to all war as an ethically valid position. It also asserts that ethical decisions on political matters must be made in the context of the competing claims of biblical revelation, church doctrine, civil law and one’s own understanding of what God calls him or her to do.

We therefore support all those who conscientiously object to preparation for or participation in any specific war or all wars, to cooperation with military conscription, or to the payment of taxes for military purposes, and we ask that they be granted legal recognition.

Since 1936, The United Methodist Church or one of its predecessors has provided to its members who claim to be conscientious objectors the opportunity to register. Certified copies of such registration are supplied for use with draft authorities. It is the responsibility of the church at all levels to inform its members that conscientious objection, as well as conscientious participation, is a valid option for Christians and is recognized in many countries as a legal alternative for persons liable to military conscription.

The local church’s support of an individual participating in this process does not express

agreement or disagreement with the convictions of the applicant member. Rather, the church’s task is to record which of its members are opposed to participation in military service on grounds of conscience and to assist them in securing proper counsel. When a member has registered as a conscientious objector and his or her registration has been certified by the proper authorities, that action should be recorded with the annual conference and the General Board of Church & Society.

The United Methodist Church also supports those persons who refuse to register for the draft. We deplore discrimination against those persons by any institution.

Amnesty and reconciliation. We urge understanding of and full amnesty or pardon for persons in all countries whose refusal to participate in war has placed them in legal jeopardy. We urge governments to grant political asylum to persons whose countries fail to recognize their conscientious objection to war.

Peace research, education
and action

The 1960 General Conference established the landmark study, “The Christian Faith & War in the Nuclear Age.” That study said, “The Christian Church and the individual must accept responsibility for the creation of a climate of opinion in which creative changes can occur.” It called work for these creative alternatives “our mission field as we live as disciples of the Prince of Peace.”

In order to create such a climate of conciliation and compromise, we call upon The United

Peace and justice
are two sides
of the same coin.
—Dwight D. Eisenhower

On Becoming & Being a Peace with Justice Covenant Congregation



Methodist Church, including its agencies and institutions of higher education, in the light of its historical teachings and its commitment to peace and self-development of peoples, to:

1. Seek the establishment of educational institutions devoted to the study of peace;
2. Develop alternatives to vocations that work against peace, and support individuals in their quest;
3. Explore and apply ways of resolving domestic and international differences that affirm human fulfillment rather than exploitation and violence;
4. Affirm and employ methods that build confidence and trust between peoples and countries, including training in multicultural understanding and appreciation of differences, rejecting all promotion of hatred and mistrust;
5. Continue to develop and implement the search for peace through educational experiences, including church school classes, schools of Christian mission, and other settings throughout the church; and
6. Encourage local churches and members to take actions that make for peace and to act in concert with other peoples and groups of goodwill toward the achievement of a peaceful world.

.— Adopted 1984.

Amended and readopted 2000.

#338, 2004 *Book of Resolutions*.

Amended and readopted 2008

There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male or female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.

— Galatians 3, NRSV

A Call to Repentance & Peace with Justice

A statement by the Bishops of The United Methodist Church

(November 2005)



As followers of Jesus Christ, who named peacemakers as blessed children of God, we call upon The United Methodist Church to join us in repentance and renewed commitment to Christ's reign of compassion, justice, reconciliation, and peace.

As elected and consecrated bishops of the church, we repent of our complicity in what we believe to be the unjust and immoral invasion and occupation of Iraq. In the face of the United States administration's rush toward military action based on misleading information, too many of us were silent. We confess our preoccupation with institutional enhancement and limited agendas while American men and women are sent to Iraq to kill and be killed, while thousands of Iraqi people needlessly suffer and die, while poverty increases and preventable diseases go untreated. Although we value the sacrifices of the men and women who serve in the military, we confess our betrayal of the scriptural and prophetic authority to warn the nations that true security lies not in weapons of war, but in enabling the poor, the vulnerable, the marginalized to flourish as beloved daughters and sons of God. We confess our failure to make disciples of Jesus Christ and to be a people who welcome and love all those for whom Christ died.

Aware that we are to bring forth fruit worthy of repentance, we personally and as bishops commit ourselves to:

Pray daily for the end of war in general and the Iraq war specifically; for those who suffer as the result of war, including the soldiers and their families; the Iraqi people in their struggle to find a workable form of government; and for the leaders of the United States that they will turn to truth, humility, and policies of peace through justice.

Reclaim the prophetic authority that calls nations, individuals and communities to live faithfully in the light of God's new creation where all people know their identity as beloved children of God; where justice rolls down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream; and where barriers are removed and all creation is healed, reconciled, and renewed.

Commit ourselves to peacemaking as an integral component of our own Christian discipleship, which means advocating and actively working for the things that make for peace: personal, institutional and governmental priorities that protect the poor and most vulnerable; modeling an end to prejudice toward people of other faiths and cultures; confronting differences and conflicts with grace, humility, dialogue, and respect

We're Christ's representatives.
God uses us to persuade men
and women to drop their
differences and enter into
God's work of making things
right between them.

—2 Corinthians 5:19

The Message by Eugene Peterson

On Becoming & Being a Peace with Justice Covenant Congregation

without being so cautious in confronting evil that we lose our moral authority.

We call upon all United Methodists to join in the pursuit of peace through justice as revealed in Holy Scripture and incarnate in Jesus Christ.

Let us move beyond caution rooted in self protection and recover moral authority anchored in commitment to Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace.

Let us object with boldness when governing powers offer solutions of war that conflict with the gospel message of self-emptying love.

Let us with compassion share the pain of God's children who suffer from the devastation of war and those who live in poverty resulting from misplaced priorities and misguided public policies.

Let us work toward unity in a world of diversity, that all peoples will come to know that we belong to one another, and that "in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself ... and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us" (2 Corinthians 5:19).

A Charter for Racial Justice

Adopted by the 1980 General Conference of The United Methodist Church

Because we believe that:

- God is the Creator of all people and all are God's children in one family;
- racism is a rejection of the teachings of Jesus Christ;
- racism denies the redemption and reconciliation of Jesus Christ;
- racism robs all human beings of their wholeness and is used as a justification for social, economic and political exploitation;
- we must declare before God and before each other that we have sinned against our sisters and brothers of other races in thought, in word and in deed;
- in our common humanity in creation all women and men are made in God's image and all persons are equally valuable in the sight of God;
- our strength lies in our racial and cultural diversity and that we must work toward a

world in which each person's value is respected and nurtured;

- our struggle for justice must be based on new attitudes, new understandings and new relationships and must be reflected in the law, policies, structures and practices of both church and state;

We commit ourselves as individuals and as a community to follow Jesus Christ in word and deed and to struggle for the rights and self-determination of every person and group of persons.

Therefore, as United Methodists in every place across the land, we will unite with all groups in The United Methodist Church:

- to eliminate all forms of institutional racism in the total ministry of the church with special attention given to those institutions which we support, beginning with their employment policies, purchasing practices and availability of services and facilities.

- to create opportunities in local churches to deal honestly with the existing racist attitudes and social distance between members, deepening the Christian commitment to be the church where all racial groups and economic classes come together.
- to increase our efforts to recruit women of all races into the membership of United Methodist Women and provide leadership development opportunities without discrimination.
- to create workshops and seminars in local churches to study, understand and appreciate the historical and cultural contributions of each race to the church and community.
- to increase local churches awareness of the continuing needs for equal education, housing, employment and medical care for all members of the community and create opportunities to work for these things across racial lines.
- to work for the development and implementation of national and international policies to protect the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of all people such as through support for the ratification of United Nations covenants on human rights.
- to support and participate in the worldwide struggle for liberation in the church and community.
- to support nomination and election processes which include all racial groups employing a quota system until the time that our voluntary performance makes such practice unnecessary.

Is not this the fast
that I choose:
to loose the bonds
of injustice,
to undo the thongs
of the yoke,
to let the oppressed
go free,
and to break
every yoke?

—Isaiah 58, NRSV

Peace with Justice and the General Board of Church & Society

Though economic, environmental and racial justice and human rights cannot be separated from the work towards peace with justice, the General Board of Church & Society has identified key issues:

Abolition of torture

According to well-trained interrogators within the military, the FBI, and the police, the use of torture in procuring information is unreliable and actually distracting from the hard work of interrogation. They found that nearly every victim of torture, during the subjection to torture as an interrogation technique, confessed to a crime they did not commit, gave up information that turned

out not to be useful, or supplied names of innocent friends or colleagues.

Torture in any form, whether psychological or physical, is dehumanizing to the victim and to the perpetrator. For the victim, the mental and physical scars can last a lifetime. The psychological effects can include insomnia, nightmares, memory loss, depression and post traumatic stress disorder. For the perpetrator, there is a great deal of stress and a general decline in the morals and

On Becoming & Being a Peace with Justice Covenant Congregation

ethics of a person who inflicts pain on another.

In passing the Military Commissions Act of 2006, the U.S. Congress has given the president absolute power to decide who is an enemy of the United States, and to imprison people indefinitely without charging them with a crime.

The General Board of Church & Society works with the National Religious Campaign Against Torture to advocate for the preservation of the right of due process of habeas corpus for all persons; rejecting evidence obtained through torture or coercion either by the federal government or by other countries; eliminating retroactive amnesty to government officials who authorized or ordered illegal acts of torture in the past; maintaining the international standards contained in the Geneva Conventions; refusing to allow the president to be the sole determiner of what is to be defined as torture and abuse; closing the use of secret prisons; or allowing prisoners to be sent to countries that knowingly utilize torture.

Africa

The United Methodist Church is experiencing major membership growth in Africa.

While the continent has a rich culture and natural resources needed by the entire world, the vast majority of people live in poverty. The United

Methodist Church in Africa is burdened by severe economic hardships and civil conflict, but it still cares for the hungry, the poor, the stranger, the naked, the sick and the imprisoned.

The spread of democracy and the growing strength of African civil society offer a real chance to tackle the root causes of poverty and conflict. Social movements and organizations throughout the continent have developed to hold governments accountable and to build societies where public institutions and policies will guarantee cultural, economic, political and social rights of all citizens.

Disarmament

Disarmament refers in general to the act of reducing or dismantling arms and weapons. Much of disarmament work has focused on nuclear disarmament and in banning landmines. Disarmament necessarily deals with nuclear non-proliferation, which deals with preventing the spread of nuclear weapons, its production knowledge and technology.

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), established in 1957 by the United Nations, has been the primary international anti-proliferation organization. Disarmament work at the United Nations and in the international community that includes civic and non-governmental organizations now involves a complex of issues, including those dealing with weapons of mass destruction, conventional arms and weapons especially the concern about small arms, landmines, cluster bombs and intersecting issues that concern disarmament, like terrorism, development and gender.

The concern about terrorism and disarmament underscores the basic elements of a comprehensive United Nations counter-terrorism strategy



If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor.

—Archbishop Desmond Tutu

that former Secretary General Kofi Annan first set out in his statement to the Madrid Summit in March 2005, which enunciated what are known as the “five D’s”: to dissuade disaffected groups from choosing terrorism as a tactic to achieve their goals; to deny terrorists the means to carry out their attacks; to deter states from supporting terrorists; to develop state capacity to prevent terrorism; and to defend human rights in the struggle against terrorism.

The concern about gender and disarmament underscores the necessity for gender mainstreaming for the effective implementation of the U.N. Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat & Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms & Light Weapons in all aspects of disarmament.

The concern about development and disarmament is best expressed in what the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development said. It stated: “The deep fault line that divides human society between the rich and the poor and the ever-increasing gap between the developed and developing worlds poses a major threat to global prosperity, security and stability.”

The concern about children and disarmament underscores the fact that “today’s tools of war and conflict — nuclear weapons, ballistic missiles, battleships, fighter aircraft, tanks, small arms, light weapons and landmines — take a special toll on children.

“While it is true that the defense of a nation is a special duty of every government, guaranteed by the U.N. Charter, it is equally true that the security of each child is a special responsibility of each nation, as solemnly prescribed in the Convention on the Rights of the Child.” (See <http://disarmament.un.org/child/>).

The wolf shall live with the lamb,
the leopard shall lie down with the kid,
the calf and the lion and the fatling together,
and a little child shall lead them.

—Isaiah 6, NRSV

It is a special responsibility to educate and inform the church and society about the global proliferation of both small arms and conventional weapons as well as nuclear weapons, and work for disarmament within the United Nations framework, particularly the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, and other nuclear disarmament and arms control agreements.

The General Board of Church & Society cooperates with the U.N. NGO Committee on Disarmament, Peace & Security in follow up work on nuclear non-proliferation, informed by the denomination’s position: “The United Methodist Church strongly protests all unilateral first-strike actions and strategies on the part of any government or military force” (*2008 Book of Resolutions*, “Rejection of Unilateral First-Strike Actions & Strategies,” ¶900).

Global Poverty and Hunger

Poverty kills. It kills 300,000 children every day. It shortens, injures and thwarts the lives of more than 1 billion people struggling to survive on less than \$1 U.S. a day.

At present 11 children under five die of hunger-related causes every minute, and about 800 million people suffer from chronic or acute hunger. In our prosperous world, more than 1 billion people are denied the right to clean water and 2.6 billion people lack access to adequate sanita-

On Becoming & Being a Peace with Justice Covenant Congregation

tion. Over 100 million children worldwide do not have access to education.

The United Methodist Church promotes the United Nations Millennium Development

Goals: Goals agreed upon by leaders of nations in 2000 to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger,

It is a question of a fair balance between your present abundance and their need.

—2 Corinthians 8, NRSV

universal primary education, gender equality, HIV/AIDS and malaria, child mortality, and environmental sustainability;

The United Methodist Church urges Fair

Trade: Policies and trade rules that reduce poverty; protect workers, small producers and farmers, and the environment, and allow poor developing countries to protect their industries;

The United Methodist Church advocates for Effective Development Assistance: Reform of U.S. foreign-aid programs with poverty eradication as its major goal; and

The United Methodist Church supports Debt Cancellation: Provide debt cancellation to more poor countries.

Iraq

The United States government went to war in Iraq based on false premises.

President George W. Bush appointed the bipartisan Sept. 11 Commission, chaired by former New Jersey Gov. Tom Keane and former U.S. Rep. Lee Hamilton of Indiana. The commission established that: No weapons of mass destruction were stored in Iraq; there was no attempt on the part of the government of Saddam Hussein to

purchase uranium from the nation of Niger; there were no ties between Saddam Hussein and the events of Sept. 11, 2001; and there were no ties between Saddam Hussein and al-Qaeda.

Thousands of lives have been lost and hundreds of billions of dollars have been spent in a war the United States initiated and never should have fought.

“As followers of Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, we pray for peace, stability and freedom in Iraq. We believe the Iraqi people can and should ultimately determine how it will be achieved. As people of faith we raise our voices to urge the United States government to develop and implement a plan for the withdrawal of its troops from Iraq.” (From a statement of the Governing Board of the General Board of Church & Society, fall 2005)

“As elected and consecrated bishops of the church, we repent of our complicity in what we believe to be the unjust and immoral invasion and occupation of Iraq.” (A Call to Repentance & Peace with Justice, a statement signed by 101 active and retired United Methodist bishops)

Latin America and the Caribbean

Latin America and the Caribbean are in a period of great transition. No longer existing as colonial territories solely dependent on others for social, political and economic support, much of Latin America and the Caribbean are trying to create a new identity while struggling with recurring problems.

This is a region where luxury condos tower over shanty towns, where the rich are becoming richer and the poor are losing hope of ever overcoming poverty. While new democratically elected

governments offer hope and a voice to the poor and the indigenous people, it remains to be seen if any real improvement is taking place in this region.

As the United Methodist Church, we respect the autonomy and intrinsic understanding of the conditions of Latin America and the Caribbean. By engaging with those who are part of the Methodist Church within these countries, we can engage in dialogues that result in creative alternatives for social and economic development.

The United Methodist Church is called upon to pay close attention to the critical needs in the Latin American and Caribbean region and to respond to the missional opportunities that are present, advocate with government leaders to obtain a financial aid package for Latin American countries without compromising their sovereignty or undermining their responsibility to provide for the needy, and continue advocacy for debt relief, including education of United Methodist constituency regarding these issues.

The Middle East

The ongoing violence and suffering in the Middle East is a crisis that demands the attention of the global community.

The region is consumed by the Palestine and Israel conflict, the United States war in Iraq, the conflict in Afghanistan, and acts of terrorism. It is one of the most militarized regions in the world and most arms sales occur there. There is concern



that Iran may be building a nuclear weapon. Israel has a nuclear weapon.

“As people of faith we raise our voices in protest against the tragedy of the unjust war in Iraq. We urge the United States government to develop and implement a plan for the withdrawal of its troops. The U.S. invasion has set in motion a sequence of events which may plunge Iraq into civil war.” (Statement of the Governing Board of the General Board of Church & Society, 2005)

Nuclear weapons

The U.S. government proposes to modernize its nuclear weapons complex to build new nuclear weapons.

This proposal, called Complex 2030, sends the wrong message to the world. At the time the U.S. government is concerned about Iran getting nuclear weapons, it proposes to build a new nuclear weapon called the Reliable Replacement Warhead. This would undermine the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, a treaty signed by more than

180 countries who promised to forego nuclear weapons provided the nuclear powers abolished theirs.

The U.S. government should lead the way for the global abolition of nuclear weapons by immediately making a plan for how to freeze, lock down, reduce and eliminate nuclear weapons in a step-by-step process with ever increasing verification.

The U.S. government should lead the way for the global abolition of nuclear weapons.

suffering.

Terrorism

“The Church condemns all acts of terror, and urges all world leaders to repudiate violence and the killing, and examine the causes of terrorism and affirm international cooperation to confront terrorism” (2008 *Book of Resolutions*, “Plan to Eliminate Terrorism” ¶891).

Horrific terrorist attacks of recent years have

caused fear and desperation among many people around the world, contributing to feelings of hopelessness and powerlessness. During the past four decades, many nations have suffered acts of terror perpetrated by diverse political and religious groups and governments.

This tragic global phenomenon has assumed an even greater prominence, and debates over “fighting terrorism” have taken on broader and more varied meanings.

As The United Methodist Church looks to Jesus Christ to find faithfulness in the midst of this tragedy, we recognize that the real threat is the fear that it causes, not the terrorist himself or herself.

The church has a prophetic message to proclaim in what some have called an age of global terror. The image of God and the sacrifice of Christ

Philippines

At no time in Philippines history, including the time of the military dictatorship of Ferdinand Marcos, have so many men and women of the cloth been killed, including a United Church of Christ in the Philippines bishop and a United Methodist pastor.

Journalists, human rights advocates and trade unionists are also being killed. Filipino and international human rights organizations, including the United Nations have documented hundreds of killings by the Philippine military.

The cry of the Filipino people is to stop the killings. It is a cry against impunity.

The United Methodist churches in the Philippines have asked United Methodists around the world to speak out about the extrajudicial killings and requested our assistance to end the



bestow a worth and dignity on each human being that cannot be rightfully ignored or violated by any human institution or social movement.

For this reason, we condemn all acts of terrorism, with no exception for the target or the source.

God's Renewed Creation: Call to Hope & Action

A message of justice and social action
from the Council of Bishops of The United Methodist Church



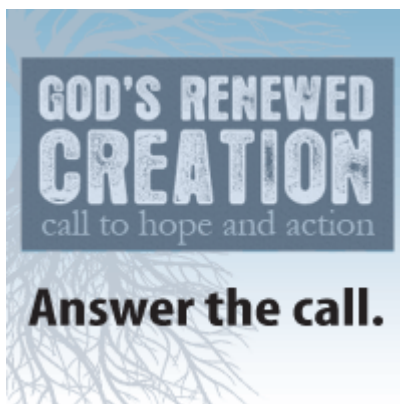
“God’s Renewed Creation: Call to Hope & Action” is a message of justice and social action from the Council of Bishops of The United Methodist Church. As leaders of the 12 million member global United Methodist Church, the bishops issue major statements on critical issues affecting church and society.

This new pastoral letter is a successor to their landmark message, “In Defense of Creation: The Nuclear Crisis & a Just Peace,” shared at a similarly frightening and critical time during the Cold War.

This pastoral call to hope and action urges us to recognize that God’s Creation is in crisis: We cannot be silent, nor can we help our world until we change our own way of being in it. It contains nine pledges made by each bishop for hopeful, robust and transforming change.

Growing out of the tradition of “speaking truth to power” this God’s Renewed Creation offers resources, opportunities for personal action, social networking and up-to-date information on issues that advocates and public officials are

facing. The message of God’s Renewed Creation is urgent and anticipates our responses in the form of transforming changes in our personal, community, public and global behavior.



For three years, the bishops held hearings with issue specialists and theologians, and sponsored focus groups, online surveys, and listening events with over 5,000 members of the denomination around the world. The biblical and theological teachings of the church and social justice policies adopted by the General Conference are

the foundation for their reflection on the three threats emphasized in the message:

- pandemic poverty and disease,
- environmental degradation, and
- proliferation of violence and weapons.

“Because these threats are interconnected, each one compounds the effects of the others. This means that people and the planet experience the cumulative effects of this storm.

“The interrelated nature of these threats also makes it exceedingly difficult to make any real headway on any individual issue.

On Becoming & Being a Peace with Justice Covenant Congregation

God's creation is in crisis.

—God's Renewed Creation

"We find ourselves overwhelmed by complex webs of brokenness: injustice against migrants, resource scarcity elevated to warfare, energy

crises, environmental racism, economic globalization, and violence against the most vulnerable, especially women and girls."

HopeandAction.org is a place to connect, share ideas and stories, and get the latest alerts for action in national and international policy arenas. What will be your actions for sustainability, stewardship, sufficiency, and justice?

You'll find on the website issue overviews, backgrounders, news, action options and stories. Share your own analyses, visuals, interviews and stories of these issues in your own context through "Contact Us."

Read the Pastoral Letter and the Foundation Document, which are available in six languages on

www.hopeandaction.org.

Encourage your pastor, teacher or group leader to read it aloud in a service or meeting. Direct your own networks to this site.

The call to action is politically and globally nonpartisan. It is a statement of 69 active bishops from around the world continuing in our

denomination's tradition of "speaking truth to those in power" in national capitols, in state and regional legislatures, and in community councils. The grounding values are the same across political parties, cultures and nations: justice, sustainability, stewardship, sufficiency, hope and action. The positions are those adopted by the global General Conference of The United Methodist Church.

Each bishop committed to nine different pledges by adopting their Pastoral Letter. The pledges are for personal changes in lifestyle and advocacy with those in power as well as professional changes in the operations and ministry settings of each United Methodist episcopal area affecting each of the 43,000 global congregations of the denomination.

The bishops and every United Methodist will hold each other accountable for the transforming pledges of the Pastoral Letter. Multiply these pledges by the pledges of 12 million individual United Methodists, and there will be transforming and astonishing action to rescue and protect God's good Creation for generations to come.

Hopeandaction.org has studies and resources, including Web links to other groups and individuals active in these areas of social justice. Gather one or several small groups to use the studies. Use the resources coordinating with the study sessions, feature articles and news reports on the site. Share with us any resources you find helpful at "Contact Us" on hopeandaction.org.

We find ourselves overwhelmed by complex webs of brokenness.

—God's Renewed Creation

Defining justice & charity: A story

Sometimes when you're a Christian trying to witness to your faith by helping others, it's hard to decide what would be the best way to serve in a certain situation. Read the parable that follows and think about what you would do if you were one of the villagers.

Once upon a time there was a small village on the edge of a river. The people there were good, and the life in the village was good.

One day a villager noticed a baby floating down the river. The villager quickly jumped into the river and swam out to save the baby from drowning.

The next day this same villager was walking along the river bank and noticed two babies in the river. She called for help, and both babies were rescued from the swift waters. And the following day, four babies were seen caught in the dangerous current. And then eight, then more, and then still more.

The villagers organized themselves quickly setting up watch towers and training teams of swimmers who could swim the swift waters and rescue babies. Rescue squads were soon working 24 hours a day. And each day the number of helpless babies floating down the river increased.

The rescue squads were now saving many children each day. Groups were trained to give mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. Other persons prepared formula and provided clothing for the chilled babies. Many villagers made clothing and knitted blankets. Still others provided foster homes for the children.

While not all the babies could be saved, the villagers felt they were doing well to save as many as they could each day. Indeed, the village priest

blessed them in their fine work. And life in the village continued to be good.

One day, however, someone raised the issues: "Where are all these babies coming from? Who is throwing them into the river? And why? Let's organize a team to go upstream and investigate."

Other villagers answered, "But if we go upstream, who will conduct the rescue operation? We need every concerned person here?"

"But don't you see," cried the one, lone voice, "if we find out who is throwing the babies in, we can stop the problem and no children will drown. By going upstream, we can get rid of the cause of the problem."

"It is too rainy."

"If we don't go and find the cause of the problem, more and more babies will float down the river: We will be unable to save them all."

"No, it's still too risky."

"I say we call a village meeting tomorrow and vote to decide what we should do to best help these babies!"

If you were a villager, what would you do?



— Adapted from "A Parable of Good Works," in *Must We Choose Sides: Christian Commitment for the '80s* by the Inter-Religious Task Force for Social Analysis (1979, pages 114-115)

Step 2: Establish Connections

The Peace with Justice Committee encourages and supports local churches, districts and annual conferences:

- ◇ Understand and respond to God's call "to do the things that make for peace," by working to make shalom and salaam — peace with justice — a reality.
- ◇ Express a sense of urgency and obedience to God's call through prayer, study and action.
- ◇ Train leaders who will help establish alternatives to human injustice, violence and fear in the community, the nation and the world.
- ◇ Enter into interfaith coalitions to work for social, economic, racial and ecological justice and peace.





Connect with Others

Connecting with other justice activists is an important element in the process of becoming and being a Peace with Justice Covenant Congregation. Connect with others by:

- Working with the your conference Peace with Justice Committee.
- Familiarizing yourself with the work of the Conference committee.
- Making personal contact with committee members in your area.
- Apply for a start-up grant from the Annual Conference committee.
- Becoming familiar with the Peace with Justice Program across the United Methodist connection.
- Reviewing the denomination's foundational documents.
- Contacting Peace with Justice Coordinators in other conferences as appropriate.
- Connecting with other faith-based and secular justice activists involved in peace with justice work.

- Looking for allies serving on other conference, district and local church committees, and identifying potential allies through their Internet sites.
- Monitoring a variety of action alert networks.
- Taking advantage of the existing involvement by members of your planning group in allied grounds.
- Initiating liaison with additional groups working for peace with justice.

Peace with Justice in your annual conference

The Peace with Justice Covenant Congregation program is for local United Methodist related communities to find ways to witness to God's demand for a faithful, just, disarmed and secure world. The recommended emphasis is still on involving congregations in responses to war, including its root causes; the global disparity between the rich and the poor; and interfaith coalitions for peace and justice.

Congregations are asked to enter into an eight-step process leading to an ongoing commit-

On Becoming & Being a Peace with Justice Covenant Congregation

ment to ministry on behalf of Peace with Justice as a way of witnessing to the whole gospel.

The members of some churches have decided to become a Peace with Justice Covenant Congregation in a relatively short time. Others choose

to move more slowly through the process to ensure that they completely understand and are comfortable with what this call to covenant implies. There is no

right or wrong way to proceed.

All congregations are, however, urged to spend time reviewing the contents of a committee-developed “Workbook on Becoming & Being a Peace with Justice Covenant Congregation” before

There is no right or wrong way to proceed.

they begin to engage in the process.

The Conference Peace with Justice Committee stands ready to help congregations at every step of the way as they move towards becoming and being a Peace with Justice Covenant Congregation. Grants up to \$500 are available to cover initial out-of-pocket expenses. Members of the Committee are available to serve as resource persons or to help structure specific programs or projects. Funding for additional program or projects is available on a case-by-case basis to the extent that such funds are generated from the once a year Conferencewide Peace with Justice Sunday offering.

Connect with others

A sampling of faith-based & secular peace with justice groups follows, and some addressing workers’ justice, fair trade, livable wage and eco-justice.

American Friends Service Committee

The American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) carries out service, development, social justice, and peace programs throughout the world. Founded by Quakers in 1917 to provide conscientious objectors with an opportunity to aid civilian war victims, AFSC’s work attracts the support and partnership of people of many races, religions and cultures. (www.afsc.org/)

Amnesty International

Founded in London in 1961, Amnesty International (AI) is a Nobel Prize-winning grass roots activist organization with over 1.8 million

members worldwide. AI undertakes research and action focused on preventing and ending grave abuses of the rights to physical and mental integrity, freedom of conscience and expression, and freedom from discrimination, within the context of its work to promote all human rights. Amnesty International USA is the U.S. Section of Amnesty International. (www.amnestyusa.org)

Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America

The Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America gathers, equips and mobilizes Baptists to build a culture of peace rooted in justice. It works with an array of peacemakers to change the world. (www.bpfna.org/)

Buddhist Peace Fellowship

Buddhist Peace Fellowship (BPF) members around the world are involved in disarmament, prison and environmental work, as well as human rights campaigns to address suffering in Bangladesh, Burma, Vietnam, Tibet and elsewhere. (www.bpf.org)

Call to Action

Call to Action (CTA) is a Catholic organization seeking justice in church and society. It is carrying on the work of the original CTA Conference from 1976. CTA comprises 25,000 laity, religious, clergy and bishops who believe that the Spirit of God is at work in the whole church, not just its appointed leaders. The entire Catholic Church has the obligation of responding to the needs of the world and taking initiative in programs of peace and justice. (www.cta-usa.org)

The Carter Center: Waging Peace, Fighting Disease, Restoring Hope

The Carter Center, in partnership with Emory University, is committed to advancing human rights and alleviating unnecessary human suffering. Founded in 1982 by former U.S. President Jimmy Carter and former First Lady Rosalynn Carter, the Atlanta-based center has helped to improve the quality of life for people in more than 70 countries. (www.cartercenter.org)

Catholic Worker Movement

The Catholic Worker Movement is grounded in a firm belief in the God-given dignity of every person. Today over 185 Catholic Worker communities remain committed to nonviolence,

voluntary poverty, prayer and hospitality for the homeless, exiled, hungry and forsaken. Catholic Workers continue to protest injustice, war, racism and violence of all forms. (www.catholicworker.org)

Center for Religion, Ethics and Social Policy

Operating in the cradle of Cornell University since 1971, the Center for Religion, Ethics & Social Policy (CRESP) has been a catalyst for social action, cultivating people who have pattern-breaking ideas to resolve the most pressing social problems and mobilize others to action. (cresp.cornell.edu)

Christian Peace Witness for Iraq

Christian Peace Witness for Iraq is an Ecumenical, ad hoc group of partners called and committed to raising a Christian voice for peace. (www.christianpeacewitness.org)

Church of the Brethren Washington Office

The Church of the Brethren, begun three centuries ago in Germany, has historically taken a strong stance for peace and pacifism. (www.brethren.org)

Save Darfur Coalition

Save Darfur Coalition, an alliance of over 100 faith-based, humanitarian and human rights organizations. Its mission is to raise public awareness and to mobilize an effective unified response to the atrocities that threaten the lives of two million people in the Darfur region. (<http://www.savedarfur.org/content>)

On Becoming & Being a Peace with Justice Covenant Congregation

Catholic Peace Fellowship

The purpose of the Catholic Peace Fellowship is to support Catholic conscientious objectors through education, counseling and advocacy. (www.catholicpeacefellowship.org)

Coalition for World Peace

The Los Angeles-based Coalition for World Peace works toward a world where peace and justice prevail, and works to educate and mobilize communities for peace and justice by forging alliances with organizations and individuals to call on each other and all others to bring an end to violence and create a future of peace and justice. (www.coalitionforworldpeace.org)

CODEPINK

CODEPINK is a women-initiated grass roots peace and social justice movement working to end the war in Iraq, stop new wars and redirect resources into health care, education and other life-affirming activities. (www.codepink4peace.org)

Churches for Middle East Peace

A coalition of public policy offices of national denominations and agencies that bring the perspectives and long Middle East experience of its member bodies to the public policy arena. (www.cmep.org)

Disarm Education Fund

The Disarm Education Fund is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that promotes peace, social justice and human rights. Founded in 1976 as a gun-control group, Disarm has broadened its mission

and transformed into an internationally recognized advocacy and medical assistance organization. (www.disarm.org)

Disciples of Christ

The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), while founded on American soil in the early 1800s, identifies itself as a “movement for wholeness in a fragmented world.” (www.disciples.org)

Ecumenical Advocacy Days

Ecumenical Advocacy Days is a movement of the ecumenical Christian community, and its recognized partners and allies, grounded in biblical witness and shared traditions of justice, peace and the integrity of creation. The goal, through worship, theological reflection and opportunities for learning and witness, is to strengthen the Christian voice and to mobilize for advocacy on a wide variety of U.S. domestic and international policy issues. (www.advocacydays.org)

End the Occupation (Israel/Palestine)

The U.S. Campaign to End the Israeli Occupation is working for freedom from occupation and equal rights for all by challenging U.S. policy towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Its strategy is to inform, educate, and mobilize the public to change the U.S. role in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to support peace, justice, human rights and international law. (www.endtheoccupation.org)

Episcopal Peace Fellowship

The Episcopal Peace Fellowship is a national membership organization connecting all who seek a deliberate response to injustice and violence and want to pray, study and take action for justice

and peace in our communities, our church, and the world. (epfnational.org/index.html)

Every Church a Peace Church

The mission of Every Church a Peace Church is to call every church to embrace the form of power taught and demonstrated by Jesus, the power of nonviolent struggle. The goal is to recover gospel nonviolence as a norm for all churches. (www.ecapc.org)

Evangelical Lutheran Church of America Church in Society

This unit studies social issues, prepares social statements for its denomination's consideration and action, and promotes moral deliberation. (www.elca.org)

Fellowship of Reconciliation

Founded in 1919 in response to the horrors of war in Europe, Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR) has taken a consistent stance against war and its preparation throughout its history. Perceiving the need for healing and reconciliation in the world, the founders of FOR formulated a vision of the human community based upon the belief that love in action has the power to transform unjust political, social, and economic structures. (www.ifor.org)

Friends Committee on National Legislation

Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) is the oldest registered, ecumenical lobby in Washington, D.C. Founded in 1943 by members of the Religious Society of Friends

(Quakers), FCNL staff and volunteers work with a nationwide network of tens of thousands of people from many different races, religions and cultures to advocate social and economic justice, peace and good government. (www.fcnl.org)

Global Exchange

Global Exchange is an advocacy group and non-governmental organization based in San Francisco, Calif. Founded in 1988, its stated aim is to promote human rights and social, economic and environmental justice around the world. (www.globalexchange.org)

Greenpeace

Greenpeace is an international non-governmental organization for the protection and conservation of the environment. (www.greenpeace.org)

Hip Hop Caucus

The Hip Hop Caucus was established in September 2004 by activists working to get out the vote. In organizing and mobilizing around the elections, the caucus realized the critical need for a sustainable political organization that empowers the Hip Hop generation to participate in the policy-making process. (www.hiphopcaucus.org)

Interfaith Immigration Coalition

A partnership of faith-based organizations committed to enacting comprehensive immigration reform that welcomes strangers and treats all human beings with dignity and respect. (www.interfaithimmigration.org)

Institute for Policy Studies

Institute for Policy Studies (IPS) is a non-profit think tank for progressive causes. Based in Washington, D.C., its work is organized into over a dozen projects, all working collaboratively and strategically to pursue three over-arching policy goals: peace, justice and the environment. (www.ips-dc.org)

International Peace Bureau

The International Peace Bureau (IPB) is the world's oldest and most comprehensive international peace federation, bringing together people working for peace in many different sectors: not only pacifists, but also women, youth, labor, religious and professional bodies. (ipb.org)

Iraq Veterans Against the War

Founded by Iraq war veterans, this organization is an advocacy group of American active-duty military personnel, Iraq War veterans, Afghanistan War veterans and other veterans who have served since 9/11 and who oppose the U.S. occupation of Iraq. The organization advocates immediate withdrawal of all U.S. and Coalition Forces in Iraq, reparations to Iraq, and full benefits, more health-care benefits, including mental health, and other support for returning servicemen and women. (ivaw.org)

Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions

Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions is a non-violent, direct-action group originally established to oppose and resist Israeli demolition of Palestinian homes in the Occupied Territories. (www.icahd.org)

Leadership Conference on Civil Rights

A coalition of nearly 200 national organizations that coordinates legislative work on civil rights issues. (www.civilrights.org)

Lutheran Peace Fellowship

Lutheran Peace Fellowship (LPF) is a community of Lutherans across the U.S. and around the globe, responding to the gospel call to be peacemakers and justice seekers. Based in Seattle since 1994, LPF offers a wide range of expertise, support and resources for youths and adults. (lutheranpeace.org)

Mennonite Church USA

A historic peace church, the Mennonite Church USA is committed to nonviolence, nonviolent resistance/reconciliation, and pacifism. (www.mennoniteusa.org)

Methodist Federation for Social Action

Methodist Federation for Social Action (MFSA) works primarily through the ministries of The United Methodist Church, supporting and augmenting peace and justice ministries at the local, conference and national levels. As an independent organization, MFSA calls United Methodists to expand its understanding of the radical call of the Gospel to be the inclusive, justice-seeking, risk-taking Body of Christ. (www.mfsaweb.org)

Military Families Speak Out (MFSO)

Military Families Speak Out is an organization of people opposed to the war in Iraq

who have relatives or loved ones currently in the military or who have served in the military since the buildup to the Iraq war in the fall of 2002. (www.mfso.org)

National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund

The National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund (NCPTF), based in Washington, D.C., is a not-for-profit organization that advocates for passage of the Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund Bill (currently H.R. 1921). When enacted, this law will restore the rights of citizens whose conscience does not permit physical or financial participation in all war. (www.peacetaxfund.org)

National Congress of American Indians

A group that informs the public and Congress about the governmental rights of American Indians and Alaska natives. (www.ncai.org)

National Council of Churches

Since its founding in 1950, the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA has been the leading force for ecumenical cooperation among Christians in the United States. The National Council of Churches has an Eco-Justice Program. (www.nccecojustice.org/)

National Religious Campaign Against Torture

An interreligious membership organization, NRCAT serves as a clearing house, promotes communication and education and develops new program initiatives to stop torture in the United States and abroad. (www.nrcat.org)

Pace e Bene

Pace e Bene's mission is to foster a just and peaceful world through nonviolent education, community building, and action. (paceebene.org)

Pax Christi USA

Pax Christi USA strives to create a world that reflects the Peace of Christ by exploring, articulating and witnessing to the call of Christian nonviolence. (www.paxchristiusa.org)

Peace Action

Peace Action is a grass roots peace network organized to place pressure on Congress and the administration through write-in campaigns, Internet actions, citizen lobbying and direct action. (www.peace-action.org)

Pentecostal Peace Fellowship

Like other Christian peace fellowships, Pentecostal Peace Fellowship (PPF) works within its religious traditions and heritages to promote the peace of Christ while also cooperating with fellow believers. (www.pcpf.org)

Physicians for Social Responsibility

Physicians for Social Responsibility (PSR) is a leading public-policy organization with 24,000 members representing the medical and public-health professions and concerned citizens, working together for nuclear disarmament, a healthful environment and an end to the epidemic of gun violence. (www.psr.org)

Ploughshares Fund

The Ploughshares Fund is a public grant-making foundation that supports initiatives to prevent the spread and use of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons and other weapons of war, and to prevent conflicts that could lead to the use of weapons of mass destruction. (www.ploughshares.org)

Presbyterian Peace Fellowship

The Presbyterian Peace Fellowship is all about taking action to reduce violence in the world. (www.presbypeacefellowship.org/)

Protestants for the Common Good

Protestants for the Common Good was formed in 1995 to bring an informed and strong Protestant voice to public life and to offer educational resources and advocacy opportunities to people of faith on matters of public policy. (www.thecommongood.org/home.asp)

Rainbow/Push Coalition

Formed as a merger of two non-profit organizations — Operation PUSH (People United to Save Humanity) and the National Rainbow Coalition — founded by the Rev. Jesse Jackson, Rainbow/Push Coalition pursues social justice, civil rights and political activism. (www.rainbowpush.org/)

Ruckus Society

The Ruckus Society provides environmental, human rights, and social justice organizers with the tools, training, and support needed to achieve their goals. (ruckus.org)

School of the Americas Watch

School of the Americas Watch (SOAW) is an independent organization that seeks to close the U.S. Army School of the Americas, under whatever name it is called, through vigils and fasts, demonstrations and nonviolent protest, as well as media and legislative work. (www.soaw.org/)

Sept. 11 Families for Peaceful Tomorrows

Peaceful Tomorrows is an organization founded by family members of those killed on Sept. 11. They have united to turn grief into action for peace. (www.peacefultomorrows.org/index.php)

Sojourners

The mission of Sojourners is to articulate the biblical call to social justice, inspiring hope and building a movement to transform individuals, communities, the church and the world. (www.sojo.net/)

TransAfrica Forum

TransAfrica Forum is a non-profit, global justice organization focusing on conditions in Africa, the Caribbean and Latin America. The organization sponsors seminars, conferences, public awareness campaigns, and training programs that promote human rights and alternative perspectives on the economic, political, and moral ramifications of U.S. foreign policy. (www.transafricaforum.org/)

Union of Concerned Scientists

Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS) is an independent non-profit alliance of more than

100,000 concerned citizens and scientists. UCS augments rigorous scientific analysis with innovative thinking and committed citizen advocacy to build a cleaner, healthier environment and a safer world. (www.ucsusa.org)

Unitarian Universalists

The Unitarian Universalists help congregations take action on their values by providing “how-to” resources on advocacy, organizing, public policy issues and the theological motivations for justice work. (www.uua.org)

United for Peace & Justice

United for Peace and Justice is a coalition of more than 1,300 local and national groups throughout the United States who have joined to oppose the U.S. government’s policy of permanent warfare and empire-building. (www.unitedforpeace.org)

U.S. Campaign to Ban Landmines

The U.S. Campaign to Ban Landmines is a coalition of approximately 500 U.S.-based organizations dedicated to a total ban on anti-personnel landmines. (www.banminesusa.org/)

U.S. Campaign to End the Israeli Occupation

The U.S. Campaign to End the Israeli Occupation is a U.S.-based coalition of more than 250 member organizations working to influence U.S. policy as it relates to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. (www.endtheoccupation.org/groups.php)

Veterans for Peace/EPF

Veterans For Peace is a national organization founded in 1985. Issues of concern include the war in Iraq, the School of the Americas, the Vietnam War, Vieques, Columbia and Central America. (www.veteransforpeace.org)

Voices for Creative Nonviolence

Voices for Creative Nonviolence (VCN) has deep, long-standing roots in active nonviolent resistance to U.S. war-making. Begun in the summer of 2005, VCN draws upon the experiences of those who challenged the brutal economic sanctions imposed by the U.S. and U.N. against the Iraqi people between 1990 and 2003. (vcnv.org/)

Women’s Action for New Directions

WAND was founded in 1982 as Women’s Action for Nuclear Disarmament. With the end of the cold war, we became Women’s Action for New Directions and have been dedicating our energies to redirect federal budget priorities away from the military and toward human needs. (www.wand.org/)

Win Without War

Win Without War is a coalition of national organizations representing broad constituencies that aim to Keep America Safe by advocating alternatives to preemptive war in Iraq. The coalition offers a mainstream, patriotic voice for engaging opinion makers, activating concerned citizens, and communicating effectively to the media. (www.WinWithoutWarUS.org)

Women in Black

Women in Black is a worldwide network of women committed to peace with justice and actively opposed to injustice, war, militarism and other forms of violence. (www.womeninblack.org/)

Workers' Justice Groups

Interfaith Worker Justice

Interfaith Worker Justice (IWJ) is a network of people of faith that calls upon our religious values to educate, organize and mobilize the religious community in the United States on issues and campaigns that will improve wages, benefits and conditions for workers, and give voice to workers, especially workers in low-wage jobs. (www.iwj.org/)

Sweat Free Communities Campaign

A campaign to end child labor and sweatshops internationally. Supporters are encouraged to purchase manufactured goods produced by companies that pay livable wages. (www.clrlabor.org/campaigns/SweatFree/sweatfree.htm)

The National Labor Coalition

The mission of the National Labor Committee (NLC) is to help defend the human rights of workers in the global economy. The NLC investigates and exposes human and labor rights abuses committed by U.S. companies producing goods in the developing world. NLC undertakes public education, research and popular campaigns that empower U.S. citizens to support the efforts of

workers to learn and defend their rights. As they fight for the right to work in dignity, in healthy and safe workplaces and to earn a living wage, NLC will work with them to provide international visibility and backing for their efforts — and to press for international legal frameworks with effective enforcement mechanisms that will help create a space where fundamental internationally recognized worker rights can be assured. (www.nlcnet.org/)

Child Labor Coalition

The Child Labor Coalition exists to serve as a national network for the exchange of information about child labor; provide a forum and a unified voice on protecting working minors and ending child-labor exploitation; and develop informational and educational outreach to the public and private sectors to combat child-labor abuses and promote progressive initiatives and legislation. (www.stopchildlabor.org/)

Images of Child Labor: Photography for Social Change

The mission of Child Labor and the Global Village project is to educate people about this complex issue, move people emotionally and motivate people to action. Drawing on inspiration from the Farm Security Administration photo-journalists of the 1930s and 1940s, the project is a team of 11 photographers who will be photographing child workers around the globe. Photos produced by the project are part of an exhibit that has traveled to the U.S. Congress, universities, schools and other forums in the United States. (www.childlaborphotoproject.org/index.html)

International Labor Rights Forum

International Labor Rights Forum is an advocacy organization dedicated to achieving just, humane treatment for workers worldwide. (www.laborrights.org/)

National Farm Workers Ministry

National Farm Worker Ministry (NFWM) is an inter-faith organization that supports farm workers as they organize for empowerment, justice and equality. When United Farm Workers founder César Chávez began organizing in the 1960s, he called on the religious community to change its emphasis from charity to justice. NFWM became the vehicle for people of faith to respond to that call. NFWM brings together national denominations, state councils of churches, religious orders and congregations, and concerned individuals to act with the farm workers to achieve fundamental change in their living and working conditions. (www.nfwm.org)

Fair Trade

Fair Trade is an equitable partnership between marketers and producers within the country of origin as well as between nations. A fair-trade partnership provides equitable prices for labor and products.

Fair Trade Resource Network

Founded in 1999, the Fair Trade Resource Network (FTRN) seeks to build a more just and sustainable world by gathering, developing and disseminating educational resources about Fair Trade. FTRN is the only non-profit organization in the world focused exclusively on fair-trade education, helping people to better understand the impact of their buying decisions.

FTRN also works to create a space for dialogue and exchange within the fair-trade movement. Whether through

in-person meetings or online exchanges, FTRN propels the fair-trade movement in the U.S. through critical discourse and information sharing. (www.fairtraderesource.org)

Interfaith Working Group on Trade & Investment

The Interfaith Working Group on Trade & Investment is a Washington-based coalition with representatives from a range of faith-based organizations committed to asserting a stronger presence of communities of faith in public-policy discussions on international trade and investment. (www.tradejusticeusa.org/)

Good Coffee for a Good Cause

The UMCOR Coffee Project links congregations with small farmers and their families through fair trade. It is a way to help people while enjoying fellowship and an excellent cup of coffee. In addition your support of the UMCOR Coffee Project provides income to UMCOR. (new.gbpm-umc.org/umcor/work/hunger/fair-trade/)

Equal Exchange

Equal Exchange's mission is to build long-term trade partnerships that are economically just and environmentally sound, to foster mutually beneficial relationships between farmers and consumers and to demonstrate, through its success, the contribution of worker cooperatives and fair trade to a more equitable, democratic and sustainable world. (www.equalexchange.coop)

A resolution regarding the use of Fair Trade Coffee was approved at the 2004 General Conference.

Fair Trade Day (second Saturday in May)

Support fair prices for farmers and the empowerment of women, investment in communities and people, and environmental sustainability. Fair Trade Day invites us to join neighbors in justice-centered economics.

Livable Wage

All people have the right to a job that meets their basic needs. They have the right to organize into a union and they have the right to work in a respectful work environment.

Fair Labor Assn.

Incorporated in 1999, the Fair Labor Assn. (FLA) is a collaborative effort of socially responsible companies, colleges and universities, and civil society organizations to improve working conditions in factories around the world. FLA has developed a Workplace Code of Conduct, based on International Labor Organization standards, and created a practical monitoring, remediation and verification process to achieve those standards. (www.fairlabor.org/)

Eco-Justice Groups

Alliance for Sustainable Jobs & the Environment

In 1999, the Alliance for Sustainable Jobs & the Environment incorporated both as a 501(C)(3) and 501(C)(4) to address assaults to workers and the environment. The alliance is committed to creating a world “where nature is protected, the worker is respected, and unrestrained corporate power is rejected through grass roots organizing, education and action.” (www.asje.org)

Coalition on the Environment & Jewish Life

Coalition on the Environment & Jewish Life has resources suitable for Earth Day use. (www.coejl.org/)

The Evangelical Environmental Network

The Evangelical Environmental Network offers Creation Sunday resources including worship materials, sermon outlines, illustrations, adult resources, youth resources and scripture passages. (www.creationcare.org/)

Rainforest Action Network

Rainforest Action Network believes a sustainable world can be created in our lifetime, and that aggressive action must be taken immediately to leave a safe and secure world for children. (www.ran.org/)

Web of Creation

Web of Creation offers ecology resources to transform faith and society, including hymns, litanies, call to worship and readings. The organization urges congregations to take time in the church year to focus their celebration on God the Creator, Christ as the redeemer of creation, and the Spirit as sustainer of creation, to worship God along with all creation, as the Psalms enjoin, and to express gratitude, love and a commitment to care for all living things on earth. Web of Creation also offers resources on becoming a green congregation. (www.webofcreation.org/)

350.org

350 is the red line for human beings, the most important number on the planet. The most recent science reveals that unless people can reduce the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere to 350 parts per million, the earth will sustain huge and irreversible damage. 350.org works to make everyone aware of the 350 target to

political leaders feel pressure to act.
(www.350.org)

Earth Ministry

Earth Ministry is a non-profit organization dedicated to engaging people of faith in environmental stewardship. Earth Ministry works in partnership with individuals and congregations to respond to this great moral challenge through education, modeling sustainable lifestyle choices, and organizing for social change through environmental advocacy.

Eco-Justice Ministries

Eco-Justice Ministries is an independent, Ecumenical agency that helps churches answer the call to care for all of God's creation, and develop ministries that are faithful, relevant and effective in working toward social justice and environmental sustainability.

Carbon Footprint Assessment

“Tips for Greening Your Organization, Clean Air — Cool Planet” provides steps you can follow to calculate your carbon footprint. (www.cleanair-coolplanet.org/OfficeFootprint.php). Website links to the World Resources Institute's downloadable Microsoft Excel spreadsheets for accounting of energy and electricity emissions, as well as travel and commuting emissions.

Energy efficiency

- “Energy Star Congregations Guide,” Environmental Protection Agency (www.energy-star.gov/index.cfm?c=congregations_guidebook.congregations_guidebook) “Low Carbon Diet: A 30-Day Program to Lose 5,000 Pounds.”

- Empowerment Institute, (www.empowermentinstitute.net/lcd/index.html) has an accessible, easy-to-use workbook that will show you, step-by-step, how to dramatically reduce your CO₂ output in your household.
- Database for State Incentives for Renewables & Efficiency, (www.dsireusa.org) is a comprehensive source of information on state, local, utility and federal incentives that promote renewable energy and energy efficiency

Green building

- U.S. Green Building Council, (www.usgbc.org/) promotes green-building practices and education, and its LEED (Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design) Green Building Rating System. Strategies include sustainable site development, water savings, energy efficiency, materials and resources selection, and indoor environmental quality.
- “Why Build Green?” Environmental Protection Agency (www.epa.gov/greenbuilding/pubs/whybuild.htm)

The earth lies polluted under its inhabitants; for they have transgressed laws, violated the statutes, broken the everlasting covenant.

— Isaiah 24, NRSV

Renewable energy

Database for State Incentives for Renewables & Efficiency is a comprehensive source of information on state, local, utility and federal incentives that promote renewable energy and energy efficiency. (www.dsireusa.org)

Step 3: Identify & Prioritize Issues

Identify and prioritize a list of issues that could be used by individuals or groups within your congregation as part of a comprehensive Peace with Justice ministry.

Choose issues carefully

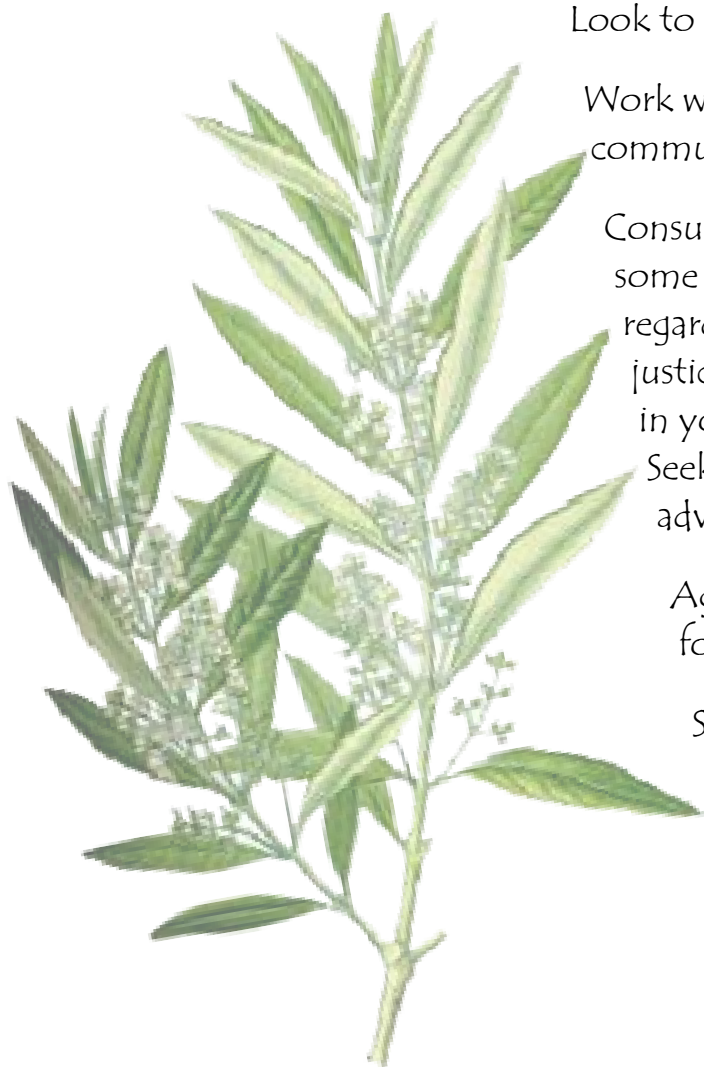
Look to your congregation's existing mercy ministries

Work with your pastor, your congregation and your community

Consult with anyone who might have some special interest or expertise regarding the specific peace with justice issues you have identified in your brainstorming session. Seek their guidance on the advisability of addressing these issues.

Agree on and implement a process for prioritizing issues list

Start small: Make it doable



Choose issues carefully

Once you have a planning group in place, it is important to carefully choose what issues to recommend taking on. Advocates must consider several things including:

- the relevance of the issues to the goal of achieving peace with justice;
- the needs in your congregation and community;
- potential resources to meet needs;
- the feasibility of realizing success;
- past efforts taken on the issues;
- the political environment in the church and community in which you will be working; and
- potential pitfalls to pursuing various goals and the costs of taking on issues.

Look to your congregation's ministries

Inventory your congregation's existing mercy ministries. Discuss ways these mercy ministries might be expanded to include a peace with justice advocacy component.

Consult with others

Talk with your pastor, members of your congregation and community, and anyone who might have some special interest or expertise regarding the specific peace with justice issues you have identified in your brainstorming session. Seek their guidance on the advisability of addressing these issues.

Possible issues to study



United Nations Millennium Development Goals

The United Nations Millennium Development Goals could be used as a basis for selecting issues to be included in your proposal for

being and becoming a Peace with Justice Covenant Congregation.

The Millennium Development Goals are a set of eight goals agreed to by world leaders in 2000 to end extreme poverty, hunger and disease

On Becoming & Being a Peace with Justice Covenant Congregation

Millennium Development Goals

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
2. Achieve universal primary education
3. Promote gender equality and empower women
4. Reduce child mortality
5. Improve mental health
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and other diseases
7. Ensure environmental sustainability
8. Create a global partnership for development with targets for aid, trade and debt relief.

by 2015. The 2004 United Methodist General Conference, the denomination's top legislative body, supported those goals. More information about the goals can be found at <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/index.html>. See Step 5 of this workbook for a study guide to involve local congregations in addressing the issues raised by the Millennium Development Goals.

Peacemaking & the 'Powers'

A six-session program developed by the Institute of Peace & Justice for churches, youths and religious communities living in post-9/11 America, "Peacemaking & the Powers" is a six-session program that examines peace with justice issues relating to racism, materialism and militarism. The cost is \$29.95 plus shipping and can be downloaded on-line at <http://www.ipj-ppj.org> or by contacting The Institute for Peace &

Justice, 475 E. Lockwood Ave., St. Louis, MO 63119; (314) 918-2630; fax (314) 918-2643; or e-mail to ppjn@aol.com.

This Institute of Peace & Justice program is a valuable resource to help define the challenge and mandate of Christian peacemaking.

Although originally planned as a Catholic program, the six sessions reflect a strong Protestant influence primarily by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Walter Wink. It offers biblical inspiration and prayer, challenging readings and worksheets, and practical action suggestions for responding to Jesus' plea to do "the things that make for peace," to Dr. King's call to confront "the giant triplets of racism, materialism and militarism," and to Walter Wink's unmasking of the "powers of domination."

Ideal as a parish or congregation program or as part of a college or high school course on justice and peace, this 155-page binder provides detailed options and directions for leaders and the worksheets and optional background readings for participants for each of the six sessions.

1. Jesus' Peacemaking Plea & Our Response
2. Interpersonal Peacemaking & Pledge of Nonviolence
3. Confronting the "Powers" of Domination
4. Responding to the "Power" of Racism
5. Responding to the "Power" of Materialism
6. Responding to the "Power" of Militarism

Supplementary resources include a calendar of peace and justice days and seasons, additional reflective passages, music and videos, and books and websites on these issues.

In Search of Security

Issues relating to security in a post-Sept. 11 world are raised in a United Methodist bishops' study, "In Search of Security." United Methodists throughout the connection are invited to thoughtfully and prayerfully consider a faithful understanding of security in a post-Sept. 11 world.

A taskforce of the United Methodist Council of Bishops released the 32-page study and discussion guide on the Christian response to concerns about safety and security. The document is not an official statement of the Council of Bishops but is approved by the council for use by local congregations to stimulate conversation and reflection.

"In Search of Security" sets a foundation to deepen our Christian conversation about what security means within our faith and asks United Methodists to consider how inadequate fear-based ethics are in personal and political decision-making and to wrestle with the myth of human invulnerability.

The bishops have expressed a hope that "In Search of Security" would:

- cultivate a common call and vision for United Methodists that sustains and witnesses to authentic security;
- provide a model for continued dialogue for local churches, districts and annual conferences throughout the world; and
- bring feedback from local churches to the Council of Bishops on the issues addressed by this study for further reflection or action.

A short study guide has been added to the bishops' document to guide local church small groups that want to study the document, ideally in a four-week series.

The United Methodist Council of Bishops Policies for a Just Peace

Comprehensive test ban to inaugurate a nuclear freeze

Consolidation of existing treaties and phased reductions leading to the eventual goal of a mutual and verifiable dismantling of all nuclear armaments.

Bans on space weapons.

—From the Council of Bishops
Foundational Document

In Defense of Creation: The Nuclear Crisis & a Just Peace

In addition, participants should be at least somewhat familiar with two important, U.S. government documents: The National Security Strategy of the United States and The National Strategy for Homeland Security are downloadable at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/ncs/nss.html> and <http://www.whitehouse.gov/homeland/book>.

"In Search of Security" can be ordered from GBCS at (800) 967-0880, or downloaded in PDF format at <http://www.cpcumc.org/ISOS.pdf>.

The Council of Bishops office is in the United Methodist Building, across the street from the U.S. Capitol and the Supreme Court in Washington, D.C., at 100 Maryland Ave. N.E., Suite 320, Washington, D.C. 20002; (202) 547-6270, fax (202) 547-6272; cob@umc.org; and website <http://bishops.umc.org/>.

Nuclear War

Issues relating to the threat of nuclear war are covered in *“In Defense of Creation: The Nuclear Crisis & a Just Peace,”* also from the United Methodist Council of Bishops.

This foundation document presents the most complete statement on this topic ever issued by the Council of Bishops. In a pastoral letter accompanying the document, the bishops said:

“Peacemaking is ultimately a spiritual issue.

All things are bound together, all things connect.

Whatever befalls the earth, befalls also the children of the earth.

—Chief Oren Lyons,
Onandaga Nation

It is a sacred calling of Jesus. All dimensions of church life offer openings for peacemaking: family life, Christian education, the ministry of the laity, pastoral ministry in every respect, political witness, and the great fact of the church as a worldwide

company of disciples that transcends all nations, governments, races, and ideologies.

“Now, therefore, we ask you, our sisters and brothers, to join with us in a new covenant of peacemaking; to use the Bible together with our Council’s Foundation Document as basic resources for earnest and steadfast study of the issues of justice and peace.

“We call upon each local pastor and lay leader to give leadership in a local church study of the issues surrounding the nuclear threat. We ask you all to open again your

hearts, as we open our hearts to receive God’s gracious gift of peace; to become with us evangelists of shalom, making the ways of Jesus the model of discipleship, embracing all neighbors near and far, all friends and enemies, and becoming the defenders of God’s good creation; and to pray without ceasing for peace in our time.”

The bishops’ purpose in issuing the document was threefold:

1. to state clearly their convictions about the issues of the nuclear crisis and a just peace;
2. to evoke a full and fair discussion of these issues across the denomination, including the offering and discussion of alternative convictions; and
3. to urge United Methodists to do the things that work for peace.

The United Methodist Publishing House has made available again this signal work of our Council of Bishops. While the course of history has moved on since its original publication date in 1986, and different countries in different situations are faced with the issues of war in a nuclear age, the basic questions continue.

Issues Involving Unsustainable Exploitation of Water Resources

Water is essential for life. Water is crucial for sustainable development, including the preservation of our natural environment and the alleviation of poverty and hunger. Water is indispensable for human health and well-being.

Due to increasingly lower availability of water in many parts of the world, water has more and more become a “political commodity” and a basis for conflicts. Politics and laws also play a role in

areas with plenty of water resources: ownership laws and rights of disposal always gain more importance in times when this vital element becomes a commercial commodity. See www.aquamedia.at/ for more about politics and laws concerning water.

The U.N. General Assembly, in December 2003, proclaimed the years 2005 to 2015 as the International Decade for Action “Water for Life.” The primary goal of the “Water for Life” Decade is to promote efforts to fulfill international commitments made on water and water-related issues by 2015. See Advocacy guidelines (www.un.org/waterforlifedecade/who_english.pdf).

The United Methodist Council of Bishops has published “In Defense of Creation” the foundation document, which is available for purchase through Cokesbury. Study guides are available as free downloads at www.cokesbury.com.

Issues of Women & Gender from a Global Perspective

Issues involving race, class, gender and sexuality, along with the ways in which global capitalism, militarism and war affect the gendered division of labor and the commodification of women’s bodies, all contribute to the current position of women in the world.

The progression of the HIV/AIDS pandemic has had a strong impact on women, especially where certain customs and beliefs have caused infection rates among women and girls to climb at a sometimes much greater rate than the already high incidence among men. Nevertheless, given the gap between male and female life expectancy, the number of widows and older single women has increased considerably almost everywhere. Additionally, the burden of care for people living with HIV,

including orphans, particularly in Africa, is falling ever increasingly on these mainly elderly women as state infrastructures are inadequate to respond to the challenges being posed.

Although violence against women has been criminalized in nearly every corner of the world, it is still increasing. Despite the condemnation of honor killings, forced marriages, female genital mutilation and marital violence, all are still prevalent practices in societies throughout the world.

Globalization has brought greater economic opportunities and autonomy to some women, while at the same time the subsequent policy shifts in favor of more open trade and financial flows, privatization of state-owned enterprises and lower public spending has made other women more vulnerable. It has exacerbated the feminization of poverty, now recognized as a key issue facing women, especially in the developing world. Millions of the world’s poorest women still do not have access to the science and technology facilities that are transforming patterns of production, creating new jobs and ways of working, and contributing to the establishment of a knowledge-based society. These left-behind women are at risk of becoming part of the digital divide, excluded from the opportunities this new technology presents and thus becoming even further marginalized.

The changing context of gender relations, as well as the discussion on gender equality and right to sexual and reproductive health, has led to increased reassessment of gender roles throughout the world. This has further encouraged, as it should, a discussion on the roles and responsibilities of women and men in working towards gender equality and the need for changing the stereotypical roles and identities of both women and men.

Step 4

Develop a Method to Introduce the Program

Overview

Look to your congregation's mission/vision statement

Develop a method for introducing the Peace with Justice Covenant Congregation Program including the issues identified in Step 3 to individuals and groups within your congregation

Anticipate and plan for dealing with controversy

Do not be deterred by the possibility that this workbook contains material some members of your congregation may view as quite controversial.

The expression of diverse points of view can result in healthy discussion and informed decision-making.

Plan the process of raising the issues identified in Step 3 by first addressing the general subject of conflict resolution in a church setting



Look to your congregation's mission/vision statement

Your church's mission/vision statement might be or could become foundational to your initiation of a Peace with Justice ministry.

Look for constructive ways that will allow

expression of opinions in non-confrontational settings.

How discussions on controversial issues are presented and dealt with will determine creative or destructive outcomes.

Anticipate and plan for dealing with controversy

Engage conflict well

- Prepare yourself for conflict transformation
- Create a well, not a wall
- Create in yourself an openness to conflict as part of God's creation, an opportunity for growth and revelation
- Allow the well to fill
- Open your heart and mind to God's love, as incarnate in Jesus, reducing your anxiety and drawing you toward reconciliation and being a reconciler
- Be well-prepared
- Be prepared to listen for understanding, speak the truth in love, use your imagination, and be forgiving
- Be well
- Accept forgiveness and healing so that you can be a mediating presence in the conflict
- Engage others in conflict transformation
- Create a common well together
- Together analyze the conflict and design a collaborative process where everyone can participate and be responsible
- Share the well

- Create a relational covenant that clarifies and affirms how everyone will be treated in the process
- Drink deeply together
- Elicit stories of peak experiences, grace-filled moments and dreams of a preferred future

Respectful communications guidelines

R = take Responsibility for what you say and feel without blaming others

E = use Empathetic listening

S = be Sensitive to differences in communication styles

P = Ponder what you hear and feel before you speak

E = Examine your own assumptions and perceptions

C = keep Confidentiality

T = Trust ambiguity, because we are not here to debate who is right or wrong

"The Respect Guidelines" are from *The Bush was Blazing But not Consumed* by Eric H. F. Law. Used with permission.

Kaleidoscope Institute for Competent Leadership in a diverse changing world. Website: www.ladiocese.org/ki

- Let it flow
- Move from positions to interests and needs, generating options to reach consensus Move from retribution to restoration: healing the harm, affirming accountability and creating a new relationship
- Be well together
- Celebrate each step toward healing and communion. Be prayerful, persistent and patient

(Taken from Thomas Porter's *Engage Conflict Well: A Guide to Prepare Yourself & Engage Others in Conflict Transformation*, an overview of the theology, theory and practice of conflict transformation. Download entire guide at http://www.justpeaceumc.org/site/c.enJGKINqFqG/b.2237625/k.E703/ECW_Intro.htm.)

JustPeace

The mission of JustPeace Center for Mediation & Conflict Transformation is to prepare and assist United Methodists to engage conflict constructively in ways that strive for justice, reconciliation, resources preservation and restoration of community in the Church and in the world.

The scope of JustPeace Center for Mediation & Conflict Transformation will be to prepare and assist United Methodists with regard to:

- Attitudes to conflict
- Skills used before and in the midst of conflict
- Processes for transforming conflicts
- Ministries of reconciliation that support transformative attitudes skills and processes.

Making Peace with Conflict

M*aking Peace with Conflict*, edited by Carolyn Schrock-Shenk and Lawrence Ressler, is a project of Mennonite Conciliation Service. This practical guide to understanding and transforming conflict based on biblical principles is a collection of essays by over 20 authors. They offer guidelines for living through conflict in more hopeful and healthy ways. Throughout the book, biblical images and stories are called into the conversation, underlining the importance of that collection of holy stories for the writers, who seek to transform their own deep experiences with conflict through responses reflecting the divine image present in human beings.

The opening section has approaches that challenge much common wisdom about what it means to clash with others. Conflict is natural, claims Carolyn Schrock-Shenk. Almost imperceptibly she weaves in the creation account given in the first chapter of Genesis. Before describing humanity's fall out of relationship with God and each other, this great liturgy proclaims as good God's bringing forth difference: day and night, water and land, sun and moon, fish and birds, wild and domestic animals, and human beings as male and female.

Making Peace with Conflict, part of the 2005 United Methodist Women's Reading Program, can be ordered through Mennonite Publishing Network: http://www.os.mennoniteusa.org/advanced_search_result.php?simpleSearch=1&keywords=Making+Peace+with+Conflict&x=6&y=8.

Kaleidoscope Bible Study Process

Read the “Respectful Communication Guidelines” and invite members of the group to affirm them for their time together.

- Inform participants that the Bible passage will be read three times. After each reading, participants will be invited to share their reflections.
- Invite participants to capture a word, a phrase or image when listening to the passage the first time.
- Invite someone to read the passage.
- A moment of silence to capture a word, a phrase or image that stood out from the passage for them.
- Using Mutual Invitation, invite each person to share his or her word, phrase or image briefly. (This should take no more than five minutes.)
- Invite participants to consider the second question appointed for this passage. (Facilitator should prepare ahead of time a question relevant to participants’ context.)
- Invite someone to read the passage a second time.
- A moment of silence to reflect on the question.
- Using Mutual Invitation, invite each person to share his or her reflection.

- Invite participants to consider the following question while listening to the passage again: What does God invite you to do, be or change through this passage?
- Invite someone to read the passage a third time.
- A moment of silence to reflect on the question.
- Using Mutual Invitation, invite each person to share his or her reflection.
- End the session with a prayer circle: Invite participants to join hands in a circle. Invite each person to mentally complete the sentences:

I thank God today ...

I ask God today ...

The leader will begin by sharing his or her prayers.

After he or she has shared,

the leader then squeezes

the hand of the person to the right. That will

be the signal for the next person to share his

or her prayers. If the person does not want to

share, he or she can simply pass the pulse to

the next person. When the pulse comes back

to the leader, he or she can begin the Lord’s

Prayer and invite everyone to join in.

(From *The Wolf Shall Dwell with the Lamb* by Eric H. F. Law. Used with permission. Kaleidoscope Institute for Competent Leadership in a diverse changing world. Website: www.ladiocese.org/ki)

I thank God today ...

I ask God today ...

Step 5: Design an Action Plan

Involve the members of your congregation

Provide training in the spirituality and practice
of active nonviolence

Provide opportunities for involvement
in one or more issues

Make a commitment to your action plan

Involve the wider community when possible



Involve the members of your congregation

A successful action plan for Becoming a Peace with Justice Congregation should involve as many members of the congregation as possible.

Find ways to begin explaining the Peace with Justice Covenant Congregation program at meetings of various ongoing church groups and committees. Do not overlook groups not directly involved in social action.

Keep presentations brief and appropriate for the group.

Involve the church choir in a discussion about the current as well as historical meaning of key words in their anthems.

Write articles in your church newsletter about issues identified in Step 3.

Initiate a new broader-based Bible study and/or a study of the history of the Methodist movement before dealing with specific issues.

Use tools such as a spiritual gifts inventory to determine the interests of the congregation and use those findings as a foundation for your plan.

Use social networking tools such as Facebook, MySpace or Twitter to encourage suggestions and discussions as well as to invite people to planned activities and studies.

Provide training in the spirituality and practice of active nonviolence

Active nonviolence

The action plan for becoming and being a Peace with Justice Covenant Congregation should include training in spirituality and the practice of active nonviolence.

Workshops

- *Engage: Exploring Nonviolent Living* is a nonviolence training and action program for learning, practicing and experimenting with the power of nonviolence to learn and create nonviolent alternatives, and connect with others for nonviolent alternatives.
- *From Violence to Wholeness* workshops, trainings, courses and study groups provide participants with a vision, method and tools

to challenge and transform patterns and policies of violence in their lives and in the larger world.

- Peace e Bene also offers religious community training.

Publications & guides

- *More Jesus & Nonviolence* by Walter Wink shows that the Christian tradition of non-violence is needed as an alternative to the dominant and death-dealing “powers” of our consumerist culture and fractured world.
- *Jesus & the Disinherited* by Howard Thurman is a classic theological treatise that demonstrates how the Gospel may be read as a manual of resistance for the poor and disenfranchised.

On Becoming & Being a Peace with Justice Covenant Congregation

- *God & Empire* by John Dominic Crossan reveals themes in Scripture about the dangers of empire and power that are especially relevant today, when the U.S. is the world's lone super power.
- *Engage: Exploring Nonviolent Living*, a revised and expanded version of *From Violence to Wholeness*, written by Laura Slatery, Ken Butigan, Veronica Pelicarić and Ken Preston-Pile, is full of stories, exercises and resources. Engage is a workbook to learn, study and practice the

nonviolent options available. It is ideal for advocacy organizations, faith communities, citizen action leagues, campus networks and any group seeking to work together to create a society committed to justice, democracy, peace, sustainability and equality.

Pace e Bene

- *Healing the Woundedness: The Transforming Power of Active Nonviolence* is a 10-part study and action program that draws on the vision of Jesus, Gandhi, Martin Luther King Jr., and Dorothy Day. It explores nonviolence as a creative, powerful and effective process for addressing and resolving the conflicts.
- *Applying Non-Violence Principles in a Time of War*, a transcript of an interview of the Rev. James Lawson by Steve Inskeep of National Public Radio about how those principles apply in a time of war. A transcript of the interview is available at <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=6676164>.

These and other resources for facilitators and trainers are available at the Pace e Bene Web site at <http://paceebene.org/>.

The Peace with Justice Committee encourages and supports local churches, districts and the annual conference:

- ◊ Understand and respond to God's call "to do the things that make for peace," by working to make shalom and salaam — peace with justice — a reality.
- ◊ Express a sense of urgency and obedience to God's call through prayer, study and action.
- ◊ Train leaders who will help establish alternatives to human injustice, violence and fear in the community, the nation and the world.
- ◊ Enter into interfaith coalitions to work for social, economic, racial and ecological justice and peace

One of the Committee's primary goals is to involve a minimum of 30 new churches each year in the process of deciding to become a Peace with Justice Covenant Congregation.

Provide opportunities for involvement in one or more issues

Use study and discussion of peace with justice issues to pave way for commitment

Sample study

The Millennium Campaign

The Millennium Campaign encourages and supports existing campaigns working at the regional and national levels to hold governments to account for their part in meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDG).

- Know the facts: learn more about the Millennium Goals and how U.S. action measures up.
- Adopt a resolution supporting the MDGs. Encourage city council and other civic groups to do the same. Many U.S. cities have done this, make it a trend!
- Write letters to your representatives in Congress expressing the importance of the MDGs and asking that they assure that the U.S. commitments are met.
- Volunteer for an organization working on MDG-related causes or support their efforts in other ways. See <http://endpoverty2015.org/>.

Eradicating Global Poverty: A Christian Study Guide on the Millennium Development Goals developed by the National Council of Churches incorporates the MDGs, which provide measurable markers within a timeline that, if world leaders and other committed persons take seriously, could lead to the elimination of the most

to action. Involve congregation in a study about eradicating extreme poverty.

extreme poverty by 2015. The 61-page study guide has six sessions for use in congregational church school classes and other settings “to foster an understanding of the pertinent issues and promote this worldwide effort on behalf of the poor.” Each session examines one or more of the eight Millennium Development Goals.

A resource used in the new study was the book, *Ending Hunger Now: A Challenge to Persons of Faith*, written by the Rev. Don Messer and



former Sens. Robert Dole and George McGovern.

“In a world of plenty, Christians dare not accept the moral scandal of allowing one person to die in this world every three seconds because of the misery-go-round of extreme poverty, hunger and disease,” said Messer, former president of Iliff School of Theology in Denver, Colo. “Now is the time to make hunger history and to work toward an AIDS-free world.”

Let the peace of
Christ rule in your
hearts, since as
members of one
body you were
called to peace.

—Colossians 3:15

As noted in the chapter on HIV/AIDS, “the extent of human suffering brought about by the global HIV/AIDS pandemic has rarely been seen before in the history of the world.”

Published by Friendship Press, 7830 Reading Road, Cincinnati, Ohio 45237, \$7.95. Order toll-free (800) 889-5733 or fax (513)

761-3722; e-mail at Rbray@gbgm-umc.org.

Meditations & Devotions on the Millennium Development Goals: A Prayerful Guide

This is a book of meditations, commentaries, devotions and prayers about the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Published by the United Methodist General Board of Church & Society, the 232-page book is a collaboration of some 150 people from around the world addressing the eight MDGs. Cost of the of this not-for-profit publication is \$7.95. Sales will benefit The United Methodist Church’s Imagine No Malaria (www.imaginenomalaria.org) and the United Methodist Global Aids Fund

(www.2020aidsfreeworld.org). Orders can be placed at: <http://www.umc-gbcs.org/MDGBook>.

Good Coffee for a Good Cause

The United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) Coffee Project links congregations with small farmers and their families through fair trade. United Methodist congregations that participate are supporting practices that help farmers in Latin America, Africa and Asia earn a fairer share of income, obtain access to credit and technical support, and gain a trading partner they can trust, a fair-trade organization called Equal Exchange. See <http://gbgm-umc.org/umcor/hunger/coffee.cfm>.

Arms Control Campaign

Thousands of people are killed, injured, raped and forced to flee from their homes as a result of the unregulated global arms trade. The Control Arms campaign is calling for an international, legally binding arms trade treaty to ease the suffering caused by irresponsible weapons transfers. The campaign is jointly run by Amnesty International, International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA) and Oxfarm. See <http://www.controlarms.org/>.

Global Call to Action Against Poverty (GCAP)

Global Call to Action Against Poverty (GCAP) is the world’s largest civil society movement calling for an end to poverty and inequality See http://www.whiteband.org/index_html/switchLanguage?set_language=en.

Step 6: Become a Covenant Congregation

Bring a written proposal to become a Peace with Justice Covenant Congregation to the appropriate decision-making body in the local church

Include a summary of your proposed action plan including list of potential justice issues included in the proposed plan

Be prepared to deal with anticipated concerns about dealing with controversial peace with justice issues

Present an interim plan to your decision-making body if final decision on becoming a Covenant Congregation is delayed

Propose a congregation-wide peace with justice Bible study while decision-making body is deliberating your proposal

Agree to limit the initial involvement to a congregation-wide study of the issues involved in becoming a Peace with Justice Covenant Congregation



Step 7: Celebrate the Covenant

A Peace with Justice Covenant Congregation Program action plan should provide for the involvement of a significant number of the members of your congregation

Organize a special worship service of commitment

Give a party

Plant a peace pole

Reach beyond your congregation
in whatever you do

Publicize your celebration

Invite your neighbors

Invite the media

Invite members of the Conference
and District Peace with Justice
committees into your celebration

Have a good time! Really celebrate!

Worship resources



Organize a special worship service of commitment to celebrate the covenant

A Ritual for Peace

*From Erin Mills United Church, Mississauga, Ontario
The United Church of Canada/L'Eglise Unie du Canada*

This could be used as a closing after a meeting or gathering to celebrate your decision to become a Peace with Justice Congregation.

Each person is provided with a taper and one of the following passages on peace. The Christ Candle is in the center of the room. If possible

gather people in a circle around the Christ Candle.

As persons light a candle, they read their passage on peace.

Feel free to adapt to meet your group's needs.

Scripture passages on peace

Romans 12:20

If your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink.

Isaiah 2:4

Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

Luke 2:14

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward all.

Romans 14:17

For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

Romans 14:19

Let us then pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding.

Proverbs 12:20

There is deceit in the hearts of those who plot evil, but joy for those who promote peace.

John 14:27

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

Colossians 3:15

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace.

2 Corinthians 13:11

Mend your ways, heed my appeal, agree with one another, live in peace, and the God of love and peace will be with you.

Psalms 4:8

I will both lie down and sleep in peace; for you alone, O God, make me lie down in safety.

Matthew 5:9

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.

Ephesians 4:1-3

I beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and

On Becoming & Being a Peace with Justice Covenant Congregation

gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Psal^m 9:18

For the needy shall not always be forgotten, nor the hope of the poor perish forever.

Psal^m 29:11

May God give strength to God's people and bless them with peace!

Psal^m 33

Rejoice in the LORD, O you righteous! Praise befits the upright. Praise the LORD with the lyre,

make melody to him with the harp of ten strings! Sing to him a new song, play skillfully on the strings, with loud shouts.

For the word of the LORD is upright; and all his work is done in faithfulness.

He loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full of the steadfast love of the LORD. By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, and all their host by the breath of his mouth. He gathered the waters of the sea as in a bottle; he put the deeps in storehouses.

Let all the earth fear the LORD, let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him! For he spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood forth. The LORD brings the counsel of the nations to nought; he frustrates the plans of the peoples. The counsel of the LORD stands for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations. Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD, the people whom he has chosen as his heritage!

The LORD looks down from heaven, he sees all the sons of men; from where he sits enthroned

he looks forth on all the inhabitants of the earth, he who fashions the hearts of them all, and observes all their deeds.

A king is not saved by his great army; a warrior is not delivered by his great strength. The war horse is a vain hope for victory, and by its great might it cannot save. Behold, the eye of the LORD is on those who fear him, on those who hope in his steadfast love, that he may deliver their soul from death, and keep them alive in famine.

Our soul waits for the LORD; he is our help and shield. Yea, our heart is glad in him, because we trust in his holy name. Let thy steadfast love, O LORD, be upon us, even as we hope in thee.

Psal^m 34

A Psalm of David, when he feigned madness before Abimelech, so that he drove him out, and he went away. I will bless the LORD at all times; his praise shall continually be in my mouth. My soul makes its boast in the LORD; let the afflicted hear and be glad. O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together!

I sought the LORD, and he answered me, and delivered me from all my fears. Look to him, and be radiant; so your faces shall never be ashamed. This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles.

The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear him, and delivers them. O taste and see that the LORD is good! Happy is the man who takes refuge in him!

O fear the LORD, you his saints, for those who fear him have no want! The young lions suffer want and hunger; but those who seek the LORD lack no good thing. Come, O sons, listen to me, I will teach you the fear of the LORD.

What man is there who desires life, and covets many days, that he may enjoy good? Keep

[God] loves
righteousness
and justice

—Psal^m 33

your tongue from evil, and your lips from speaking deceit. Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it. The eyes of the LORD are toward the righteous, and his ears toward their cry.

The face of the LORD is against evildoers, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth. When the righteous cry for help, the LORD hears, and delivers them out of all their troubles. The LORD is near to the brokenhearted, and saves the crushed in spirit.

Many are the afflictions of the righteous; but the LORD delivers him out of them all. He keeps all his bones; not one of them is broken. Evil shall slay the wicked; and those who hate the righteous will be condemned. The LORD redeems the life of his servants; none of those who take refuge in him will be condemned.

Psalms 35:10

All my bones shall say, "O Lord, who is like you? You deliver the weak from those too strong for them, the weak and needy from those who despoil them."

Psalms 85:8

Let me hear what God will speak, for God will speak peace to God's people, to the faithful, to those who turn to God in their hearts.

Psalms 109:21-31

But thou, O GOD my Lord, deal on my behalf for thy name's sake; because thy steadfast love is good, deliver me! For I am poor and needy, and my heart is stricken within me. I am gone, like a shadow at evening; I am shaken off like a locust. My knees are weak through fasting; my body has become gaunt. I am an object of scorn to my accusers; when they see me, they wag their heads.

Help me, O LORD my God! Save me according to thy steadfast love! Let them know that

this is thy hand; thou, O LORD, hast done it! Let them curse, but do thou bless! Let my assailants be put to shame; may thy servant be glad! May my accusers be clothed with dishonor; may they be wrapped in their own shame as in a mantle!

With my mouth I will give great thanks to the LORD; I will praise him in the midst of the throng. For he stands at the right hand of the needy, to save him from those who condemn him to death.

Psalms 113:5-8

Who is like the LORD our God, who is seated on high, who looks far down upon the heavens and the earth? He raises the poor from the dust, and lifts the needy from the ash heap, to make them sit with princes, with the princes of his people.

Psalms 122

A Song of Ascents. Of David. I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go to the house of the LORD!" Our feet have been standing within your gates, O Jerusalem! Jerusalem, built as a city which is bound firmly together, to which the tribes go up, the tribes of the LORD, as was decreed for Israel, to give thanks to the name of the LORD. There thrones for judgment were set, the thrones of the house of David. Pray for the peace of Jerusalem! "May they prosper who love you! Peace be within your walls, and security within your towers!" For my brethren and companions' sake I will say, "Peace be within you!" For the sake of the house of the LORD our God, I will seek your good.

Galatians 5:22

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace,

[God] raises the poor
from the dust, and
lifts the needy from
the ash heap.

Psalms 33

On Becoming & Being a Peace with Justice Covenant Congregation

patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

Psal^m 85:10

Love and fidelity have come together; justice and peace join hands.

Luke 1:78-79

In the tender of compassion of our God, the dawn from heaven will break upon us, to shine on those who live in darkness, under the shadow of death, and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

Luke 4:14-21

And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into

‘[God] has anointed me to preach good news to the poor.’

—Luke 4

Galilee, and a report concerning him went out through all the surrounding country. And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all. And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up; and he went to the

synagogue, as his custom was, on the sabbath day.

And he stood up to read; and there was given to him the book of the prophet Isaiah. He opened the book and found the place where it was written, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.”

And he closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant, and sat down; and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. And he began to say to them, “Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.”

Isaiah 2:4

God shall judge between the nations; and shall

arbitrate for many peoples; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.

Isaiah 32:17

The effect of righteousness will be peace, and the result of righteousness, quietness and trust forever.

Isaiah 52:7

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger who announces peace, who brings good news, who announces salvation, who says to Zion, “Your God reigns.”

Isaiah 55:12

For you shall go out in joy, and be led back in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall burst into song, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.

Isaiah 56

Thus says the LORD: “Keep justice, and do righteousness, for soon my salvation will come, and my deliverance be revealed. Blessed is the man who does this, and the son of man who holds it fast, who keeps the sabbath, not profaning it, and keeps his hand from doing any evil.” Let not the foreigner who has joined himself to the LORD say, “The LORD will surely separate me from his people”; and let not the eunuch say, “Behold, I am a dry tree.”

For thus says the LORD: “To the eunuchs who keep my sabbaths, who choose the things that please me and hold fast my covenant, I will give in my house and within my walls a monument and a name better than sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name which shall not be cut off. “And the foreigners who join themselves to the LORD, to minister to him, to love the name of

the LORD, and to be his servants, every one who keeps the sabbath, and does not profane it, and holds fast my covenant — these I will bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer; their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples.

Thus says the Lord GOD, who gathers the outcasts of Israel, I will gather yet others to him besides those already gathered.” All you beasts of the field, come to devour — all you beasts in the forest. His watchmen are blind, they are all without knowledge; they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; dreaming, lying down, loving to slumber. The dogs have a mighty appetite; they never have enough. The shepherds also have no understanding; they have all turned to their own way, each to his own gain, one and all. “Come,” they say, “let us get wine, let us fill ourselves with strong drink; and tomorrow will be like this day, great beyond measure.”

Ezekiel 37:26

I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them; and I will bless them and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary among them forevermore.

Mark 9:49

“... be at peace with one another.”

Romans 15:13

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Philippians 4:3

And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

James 3:17

But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits ...

Micah 6:8

What does God require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?

Proverbs 12

Whoever loves discipline loves knowledge, but he who hates reproof is stupid. A good man obtains favor from the LORD, but a man of evil devices he condemns. A man is not established by wickedness, but the root of the righteous will never be moved. A good wife is the crown of her husband, but she who brings shame is like rottenness in his bones. The thoughts of

the righteous are just; the counsels of the wicked are treacherous. The words of the wicked lie in wait for blood, but the mouth of the upright delivers men. The wicked are overthrown and are no more, but the house of the righteous will stand.

A man is commended according to his good sense, but one of perverse mind is despised. Better is a man of humble standing who works for himself than one who plays the great man but lacks bread. A righteous man has regard for the life of his beast, but the mercy of the wicked is cruel. He who tills his land will have plenty of bread, but he who follows worthless pursuits has no sense.

The strong tower of the wicked comes to ruin, but the root of the righteous stands firm. An evil man is ensnared by the transgression of his

A man is commended
according to
his good sense,
but one of perverse
mind is despised.

—Proverbs 12

On Becoming & Being a Peace with Justice Covenant Congregation

lips, but the righteous escapes from trouble. From the fruit of his words a man is satisfied with good, and the work of a man's hand comes back to him. The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but a wise man listens to advice.

The vexation of a fool is known at once, but the prudent man ignores an insult. He who speaks the truth gives honest evidence, but a false witness utters deceit. There is one whose rash words are like sword thrusts, but the tongue of the wise brings healing. Truthful lips endure for ever, but a lying tongue is but for a moment. Deceit is in the heart of those who devise evil, but those who plan good have joy. No ill befalls the righteous, but the wicked are filled with trouble. Lying lips are an abomination to the LORD, but those who act faithfully are his delight.

A prudent man conceals his knowledge, but fools proclaim their folly. The hand of the diligent will rule, while the slothful will be put to forced labor. Anxiety in a man's heart weighs him down, but a good word makes him glad. A righteous man turns away from evil, but the way of the wicked leads them astray. A slothful man will not catch his prey, but the diligent man will get precious wealth. In the path of righteousness is life, but the way of error leads to death.

Proverbs 3:13, 17

Happy are those who find wisdom, and those who

get understanding ... Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.

Zechariah 8:16

These are the things that you shall do: Speak the truth to one another, render in your gates judgments that are true and make for peace, do not devise evil in your hearts against one another, and love no false oath.

1 Corinthians 13:11

Finally, brothers and sisters, farewell. Put things in order, listen to my appeal, agree with one another, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you.

2 Thessalonians 3:16

Now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times in all ways.

Jude 2

May mercy, peace and love be yours in abundance.

1 Samuel 2:7-8

The LORD makes poor and makes rich; he brings low, he also exalts. He raises up the poor from the dust; he lifts the needy from the ash heap, to make them sit with princes and inherit a seat of honor.

For the pillars of the earth are the LORD's, and on them he has set the world.

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Plant a Peace Pole

Planting a Peace Pole can bring people together. It serves as a reminder to pray for world peace. A hand-crafted wooden post, usually 8-feet tall, a Peace Pole carries the message "May peace prevail on earth," often in multiple languages on each side.

When a Peace Pole is planted in your community or outside a place of worship, it is a way to link with people all over the world who have planted their own poles in the

same spirit of peace. There are more than 200,000 Peace Poles in 180 countries.

Hold a Peace Pole dedication ceremony and invite members of the community, including children and senior citizens, members of all faith communities, schools, clubs, Scouts and the local media. Celebrate the planting of the peace pole with prayers, liturgy and readings. For more about Peace Poles: www.worldpeace.org/peacepoles.html or <http://www.peacepoleproject.org/indexx.html>.

Peace with Justice Sunday Worship Aids

Call to Worship I

You showed favor to your land, O Lord; you restored the hope of your people.
 You forgave the iniquity of your people and covered all their sins.
 You set aside all your wrath and turned from your fierce anger.
 As we gather in your name, restore us again, O God our Savior, and put away your displeasure toward us.

—Adapted from Psalm 85

Call to Worship II

Guard your steps when you go to the house of God;
 Go near to listen rather than to offer up empty praise.
 Let not your hearts be troubled
 Or your thoughts be on anything other than the glory of the Lord.

—Adapted from Ecclesiastes 5

Prayer of Confession I

Answer me when I call to you, O my righteous God. Give me relief from my distress; be merciful to me and hear my prayer. How long will humanity turn your glory into shame? How long will Your people love delusions and seek false gods? In my anger I have sinned; though You continue to search my heart for love. Forgive me, O Lord, and help me to follow Your teaching and live a life that is pleasing to You, so that Your face may once again shine upon me. Amen.

—Adapted from Psalm 4

Prayer of Confession II

I call on the Lord in my distress, and the Lord answers me. Save me, O Lord, from lying lips and from deceitful tongues. What will he do to You, and what more besides, O deceitful tongue? God will punish you with a warrior's sharp arrows, with burning coals of the broom tree. Too long have I lived among those who hate peace and seek out war to justify their means. Teach me to be a person of peace, so that I may do my part in bringing love to the world.

—Adapted from Psalm 120

Prayer of Confession III

Hear, O Lord, and answer me; for as rich as I may think that I am, I confess that I am poor and needy. Guard my life, for I am devoted to You. You are my God; save Your servant who trusts in You. Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I call to You all day long. Bring joy to Your servant, for to You, O Lord, I lift up my soul. You are forgiving and good, O Lord, abounding in love to all who call to You in their time of desperation and need. Hear my prayer, O Lord; listen to my cry for mercy. Amen.

—Adapted from Psalm 86

On Becoming & Being a Peace with Justice Covenant Congregation

Prayer of Confession IV

In the day of my trouble I will call to You, for You will answer me. When I have done what is wrong and displeasing in Your sight, O Lord, extend Your love to correct me.

When I ignore those in need and pretend that all is right with the world, O Lord, help me to face the truth.

When I turn a blind eye to those who have been stricken with poverty and are facing the injustices that come along with it, O Lord, teach me Your way.

Enable me to extend Your love; and give me an undivided heart, that I may fear Your name.

I will praise You, O Lord my God, with all my heart; and I will glorify Your name forever. Amen.

—Adapted from Psalm 86

Prayer of Confession V

God our Father, in the name of him who gave bread to the hungry, we remember all who through our human ignorance, folly and sin are condemned to live in want. Show us, who have so much, what we can do to help those who have so little; and bless the efforts of those who work to overcome poverty and hunger, that sufficient food may be found for all; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

—Book of Common Order of the Church of Scotland

Responsive Reading I

Leader: In a world where we are not always good stewards in caring for God's creation,

People: Lord, open our hearts and help us to be a blessing to Your world.

**Leader: In a world where a few are living off the abundance of the land,
while the many struggle to make ends meet,**

People: Lord, open our hearts and help us to be a blessing to Your children in need.

Leader: As globalization makes some wealthier while others join the ranks of the poor,

People: Lord, open our hearts and help us to be a blessing to Your children
who are facing poverty.

**Leader: While some have more homes than they need and others are condemned
to homelessness,**

People: Lord, open our hearts and help us to be a blessing to Your children
who have nowhere to lay their head.

**Leader: While statistics show that people in poverty are more likely to end up
in prison than in college,**

People: Lord, open our hearts and help us to be a blessing to Your children who need guidance.

**Leader: As news reports tell us of people who are eating themselves to death
and we turn the page to read of those who are starving to death,**

People: Lord, open our hearts and help us to be a blessing to Your children
who come to you in need.

**Leader: While many of us have taken for granted and squandered the blessings, gifts,
and talents you have given to us,**

(more)

People: Lord, open our hearts and help us to be a blessing to your children who do not realize how blessed we truly are.

Leader: In a world filled with so many people who have lost their way,

People: Lord, open our hearts and help us to be Your light that guides them back to You.

Responsive Reading II

Leader: As the screams of war rise up out of the Middle East,

People: Let the voice of the Lord be heard over the waters as we respond.

Leader: As the cries for the loss of innocent lives echo through the air,

People: Let the voice of the Lord thunder and resonate with comfort as we reach out with support.

Leader: As families are broken and homes are destroyed,

People: Let the voice of the Lord give strength to his people as we encourage them to press on.

Leader: As prisoners are tortured and held unjustly against their will,

People: Let the voice of the Lord inspire our prayers for justice.

Leader: As the young men and women of the armed forces lose their lives in the desert

People: Let the voice of the Lord shake the people of this world as we collectively pray for peace in the Middle East.

—Adapted from Psalm 29

Responsive Reading III

Leader: Sing joyfully to the Lord, you righteous; it is fitting for the upright to praise God.

People: Praise the Lord with the harp; make music to the Lord on the 10-stringed lyre.

Leader: Sing to Him a new song; play skillfully, and shout for joy.

People: For the word of the Lord is right and true; God is faithful in all God does.

Leader: The Lord loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full of God's unfailing love.

People: By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, their starry host by the breath of God's mouth.

Leader: God gathers the waters of the sea into jars; God puts the deep into storehouses. Let all the earth fear the Lord; let all the people of the world revere God.

People: The Lord foils the plans of the nations; God thwarts the purposes of the peoples.

Leader: But the plans of the Lord stand firm forever, the purposes of God's heart through all generations.

People: Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, the people God chose for God's inheritance.

Leader: From heaven the Lord looks down and sees all humankind;

People: No king is saved by the size of his army; no warrior escapes by his great strength.

Leader: But the eyes of the Lord are on those who fear God, on those whose hope is in God's unfailing love.

People: We wait in hope for the Lord; he is our help and our shield.

Leader: In hope we wait on the Lord, who is our only hope for peace.

—Adapted from Psalm 33

On Becoming & Being a Peace with Justice Covenant Congregation

Responsive Reading IV

Leader: This is what the Lord says: “Maintain justice and do what is right,

People: For my salvation is close at hand and my righteousness will soon be revealed.

Leader: Blessed are the people who do this and keep their hands from doing any evil,”

People: So that no one will be excluded from the love of God.

—Adapted from Isaiah 56

Words of Assurance

Christ is our peace; in his flesh he has broken down the dividing wall of hostility, that he might create one new humanity in place of the two. He came and proclaimed peace to those who were far off and peace to those who were near. Through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father.

—Adapted from Ephesians 2:14, 18

Prayers of Intercession

A Prayer for Peace

Almighty God, who through Your prophets foretold a day when swords will be beaten into plowshares and who in Jesus Christ made peace through the blood of the cross, pour out Your Spirit on all people everywhere so that we may be delivered from hate, hostility, and self-seeking, and find our peace in Your will. In Your mercy, make us instruments of Your peace, that Your name may be hallowed, Your kingdom come, and Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

*—from Liturgy & Psalms for the Nations of the World
(Reformed Church in America, 1968)*

Step 8: Be Who You Say You Are

A Peace with Justice Covenant Congregation Program should provide for the continuous involvement of a significant number of the members of your congregation

Use the annual Peace with Justice Sunday to commemorate a renewed commitment to the covenant

Include information about your congregation's Peace with Justice Covenant in all new-member classes

Ask your pastor to preach on Peace with Justice issues at least once every quarter

Include the fact that you are a Peace with Justice Covenant Congregation in your weekly bulletin and in all of your church publications

Continually update your action plan

Involve your congregation in at least one new Peace with Justice issue every year

Use annual Peace with Justice Sunday to commemorate new commitment



Appendix

Important dates in the history of the Social Creed

The 1908 Social Creed

The United Methodist Social Creed (1972)

Companion Litany to The Social Creed

Peace with Justice Sunday Worship Aids



Important dates in the history of the Social Creed

- 1907** **M**ethodist Episcopal church leaders Herbert Welch, Harry F. Ward, Worth Tippy, Elbert Robb Zaring and Frank Mason North call a meeting in Washington's Ebbitt House to found a "Methodist League for Social Service" patterned after the Wesleyan Methodist Union for Social Service in England.
- On Dec. 3, 25 people found the Methodist Federation for Social Service (MFSS), electing Herbert Welch as president. The next day the group is received by President Theodore Roosevelt in the White House.
- 1908** **MFSS** members author and secure adoption of the first Social Creed by the Methodist Episcopal General Conference, as well as formal recognition of MFSS itself. More than 1,000 persons attend a Federation information meeting during General Conference.
- 1909** **U**nited Brethren in Christ Church adopts a social creed.
- 1914** **T**he Methodist Episcopal Church, South, adopts a social creed much like that of the Methodist Episcopal Church .
- 1916** **T**he Methodist Protestant Church adopts the social creed of the Methodist Episcopal Church.
- 1972** **F**ollowing the 1968 union of the Methodist church and the Evangelical United Brethren Church, the General Board of Church & Society is created. General Conference adopts Social Principles.
- 2008** **T**he church celebrates the 100th anniversary of its Social Principles at General Conference in May. General Conference adopts a litany to accompany a denominational Social Creed.

1908 Methodist Episcopal Social Creed

The Methodist Episcopal Church stands ...

For equal rights and complete justice for all men in all stations of life.

For the principle of conciliation and arbitration in industrial dissensions.

For the protection of the worker from dangerous machinery, occupational diseases, injuries and mortality.

For the abolition of child labor.

For such regulation of the conditions of labor for women as shall safeguard the physical and moral health of the community.

For the suppression of the "sweating system."

For the gradual and reasonable reduction of hours of labor to the lowest practical point, with work for all; and for that degree of leisure for all which is the condition of highest human life.

For a release from employment one day in seven.

For a living wage in every industry.

For the highest wage that each industry can afford, and for the most equitable division of the products of industry that can ultimately be devised.

For the recognition of the Golden Rule and the mind of Christ as the supreme law of society and the sure remedy for all social ills.

The United Methodist Social Creed (1972)

We believe in God, Creator of the world; and in Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of creation. We believe in the Holy Spirit, through whom we acknowledge God's gifts, and we repent of our sin in misusing these gifts to idolatrous ends.

We affirm the natural world as God's handiwork and dedicate ourselves to its preservation, enhancement, and faithful use by humankind.

We joyfully receive for ourselves and others the blessings of community, sexuality, marriage and the family.

We commit ourselves to the rights of men, women, children, youths, young adults, the aging, and people with disabilities; to improvement of the quality of life; and to the rights and dignity of racial, ethnic, and religious minorities.

We believe in the right and duty of persons to work for the glory of God and the good of themselves and others and in the protection of their welfare in so doing; in the rights to property as a trust from God, collective bargaining, and responsible consumption; and in the elimination of economic and social distress.

We dedicate ourselves to peace throughout the world, to the rule of justice and law among nations, and to individual freedom for all people of the world.

We believe in the present and final triumph of God's Word in human affairs and gladly accept our commission to manifest the life of the gospel in the world.

Amen.

Social Creed Companion Litany

God in the Spirit revealed in Jesus Christ,
calls us by grace
to be renewed in the image
of our Creator,
that we may be one
in divine love for the world.

And so shall we.

Today is the day
God cares for the integrity
of creation,
wills the healing and wholeness
of all life,
weeps at the plunder
of earth's goodness.

And so shall we.

Today is the day
God embraces all hues of humanity,
delights in diversity and difference,
favors solidarity transforming
strangers into friends.

And so shall we.

Today is the day
God cries with the masses
of starving people,
despises growing disparity
between rich and poor,

demands justice for workers
in the marketplace.

And so shall we.

Today is the day
God deplores violence in our homes and
streets,
rebukes the world's warring madness,
humbles the powerful and lifts up
the lowly.

And so shall we.

Today is the day
God calls for nations and peoples
to live in peace,
celebrates where justice and mercy embrace,
exults when the wolf grazes
with the lamb.

And so shall we.

Today is the day
God brings good news to the poor,
proclaims release to the captives,
gives sight to the blind, and
sets the oppressed free.

And so shall we.

Social Principles Training

Assistance with social justice leadership and training is available through the General Board of Church & Society division of Education & Leadership Formation. Staff members are available to provide resources and

leadership on a wide range of issues. They are frequently called on to speak, teach or lead workshops, particularly related to the Social Principles.

For more information, visit the General Board of Church & Society website at <http://www.umc-gbcs.org>.

Peace with Justice Sunday

Pace with Justice Sunday, one of the United Methodist Special Sundays with offering, is observed on the first Sunday after Pentecost. The Special Sunday supports programs that advocate peace and justice at home and around the world.

Established by the 1988 General Conference, peace with justice is a faithful expression of shalom (peace) in the Bible. The Peace with Justice program aims to make shalom visible and active in people's lives and communities by setting people free from bondage.

Peace with justice will be celebrated when all people have access to adequate jobs, housing, education, food, health care, income support and clean water.

The United Methodist Church declares that peace with justice will be celebrated when all people have access to adequate jobs, housing, education, food, health care, income support and clean water. The denomination will further celebrate when structures and systems that reflect economic exploitation, war, political oppression and cultural domination no longer exist.

Half of the offering collected by an annual conference is retained to fund local peace with justice ministries. Half of the offering is remitted to the General Board of Church & Society to help fund U.S. and global work in social action, public-policy education and advocacy.

While traditionally, this United Methodist Special Sunday is observed on the first Sunday after Pentecost, congregations are welcome to celebrate Peace with Justice Sunday on any date that works best, however.

Each annual conference has a Peace with Justice coordinator. To contact your conference coordinator, go to www.gbcs.org. Click on "Peace with Justice," then click on "Peace with Justice Coordinators."

Stories of lives changed by Peace with Justice Sunday are available online at www.umcgiving.org.

You can make a gift to Peace with Justice Sunday at any time through your local church or by going to www.umcgiving.org and click on "Donate" to give to Peace with Justice Sunday.

You can also go to www.umcgiving.org to find resources to promote Peace with Justice Sunday: click on "Store" at the top of the Web page.

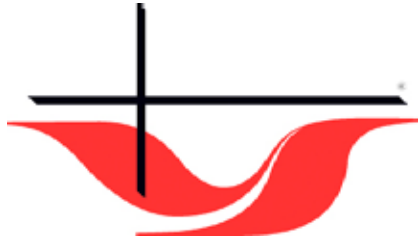
Free promotional materials are available online, including a link to a store where you can order additional free printed resources. If you would rather call and order resources, call toll free 1-888-346-3862.

Support materials include:

- Talking to your congregation about Special Sundays
- Special Sundays Pastors' Guide
- Peace With Justice Sunday Bulletin Inserts
- Peace With Justice Sunday Poster
- Peace With Justice Sunday Powerpoint



Peace with Justice Covenant Congregation



Congregation

of the

Annual Conference

has completed all requirements to be certified as
a Peace with Justice Congregation
of The United Methodist Church.

Date

Peace with Justice Coordinator

Bishop

On Becoming & Being a Peace with Justice Covenant Congregation



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