

Commitment to Peacemaking



Responding to God's Covenant, _____ now commits itself to peacemaking. In fulfilling this commitment, we will do peacemaking through:

WORSHIP: provide worship that expresses the reality of God's peace giving;

PRAYER AND BIBLE STUDY: encourage prayer, Bible study, and spiritual disciplines that nurture and deepen the spiritual life of the community and equip people to share the gospel message of peace to the world;

PEACEMAKING IN FAMILIES AND IN COMMUNITY LIVING: create opportunities for people of all ages to develop peacemaking skills such as conflict resolution, mediation, or nonviolence training that will help them grow as peacemakers in their families, in the congregation, and in the community;

COMMUNITY MINISTRIES: work with and support ecumenical and interfaith partners and other bodies in their pursuit of social, racial, and economic justice, to confront racism and all other forms of prejudice, and to respond to people in communities, local, national, and worldwide, who are caught in poverty, hurt by unemployment, or burdened by other problems;

STUDY AND RESPONSE TO GLOBAL ISSUES: support human rights and economic justice efforts in at least one area of the world—through presbytery partnerships and sister countries;

GLOBAL SECURITY: study global security concerns, work for worldwide arms control, and support alternatives to military solutions to international and civil conflicts;

MAKING PEACE WITH THE EARTH: protect and restore the environment through study, advocacy, and individual and corporate lifestyle commitments;

RECEIVING THE PEACEMAKING OFFERING: support financially the churchwide peacemaking effort by receiving the Peacemaking Offering and through other means.



The [Session] or [Other entity within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)] will provide leadership and support in its commitment to peacemaking. It will appoint a member of the committee to be the contact with other regional peacemaking committees and with the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program to receive and distribute information and resource materials that will help us to fulfill this commitment.

Signed:

Signed:

Moderator/Chairperson

Clerk/Secretary

Date

Date

Commitment to Peacemaking

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

“Peacemaking is a mandate for the church because the Prince of Peace is its Lord. Christ is the peacemaker, and all believers are called to be instruments for peacemaking.”

Peacemaking: The Believers’ Calling




The 192nd General Assembly (1980)
The United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God,” said Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace (Matthew 5:9). Peace is the wholeness and well being that God wills for all creation. Although the effects of human sin wound all creation, God is continually at work in the world offering healing, wholeness, mercy, justice, and peace. God’s peace is offered wherever there is brokenness—in individual lives, families, congregations, communities, nations and creation.

God’s gift of peace is most profoundly exemplified in the life and ministry of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Christ calls all who profess faith in him to share the gospel message of peace to a broken and insecure world. Responding to this gracious gift, the church, as the body of Christ, is called to join with others to go into the world to build a culture of peace and nonviolence for all God’s creation.

The General Assembly has affirmed in *Peacemaking: The Believers’ Calling* that God’s peace-giving is central to the message of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

It states that:

-  The Church is **faithful** to Christ when it is engaged in peacemaking.
-  The Church is **obedient** to Christ when it nurtures and equips God’s people as peacemakers.
-  The Church bears **witness** to Christ when it nurtures the moral life of the nation for the sake of peace in the world.

Therefore, congregations and other entities within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) engage in peacemaking as an integral and ongoing part of their life and mission.

“Peace is the intended order of the world with life abundant for all God’s children. Peacemaking is the calling of the Christian church, for Christ is our peace who has made us one through his body on the cross.”

Peacemaking: The Believers’ Calling

The 192nd General Assembly (1980)
The United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America

Questions and Answers

What is the *Commitment to Peacemaking*?

The *Commitment to Peacemaking* is a tool to help Presbyterians engage individually and collectively in peacemaking ministries.

Who makes the *Commitment to Peacemaking*?

Sessions, presbyteries, synods, Presbyterian Women's groups, colleges, seminaries, and other entities that include peacemaking as part of their life and mission may make the *Commitment to Peacemaking*. Sessions who have made the *Commitment to Peacemaking* in the past may use this revision to reaffirm the *Commitment* and celebrate and renew their congregation's peacemaking ministries.

Who should affirm the *Commitment to Peacemaking*?

The session is the appropriate body in the case of a congregation. The *Book of Order* gives the session responsibility "to lead in participation in the mission of the whole Church in the world" (G-10.0102c) and "to lead the congregation in ministries of personal and social healing and reconciliation in the communities in which the church lives and bears its witness" (G-10.0102g). A presbytery committee could recommend that the presbytery make the *Commitment*. Other entities will need to think through their procedures to determine if a board of trustees, a council, or the entire group is the appropriate body to adopt the *Commitment*.

We have done peacemaking for a number of years. Why should we make a commitment now?

Making the *Commitment* can help members of a congregation or other entity understand that peacemaking is not a peripheral issue but a central declaration of the gospel and essential to the life of the congregation or other entity. The *Commitment* provides an invitation to grow in peacemaking and to pass on peacemaking ministries to future generations.

The Peacemaking Offering, one of four special offerings of the PC(USA), funds peacemaking efforts of congregations, presbyteries, synods, and the General Assembly. **25 percent** of the offering remains in the **congregation** to support its peacemaking efforts, **25 percent** goes to **presbytery** and **synod** efforts, while **50 percent** supports the work of the **Presbyterian Peacemaking Program**. The Presbyterian Peacemaking Program uses its share of the Offering to assist congregations, governing bodies, and other entities of the denomination to do peacemaking. Most congregations receive the Peacemaking Offering on World Communion Sunday (the first Sunday in October).

Does making a commitment mean having to do something in all eight areas of the *Commitment to Peacemaking* at one time?





It would be difficult to do everything at once. The *Commitment* provides opportunities to choose areas of emphasis that can vary at different times as different needs and opportunities for ministry arise.

May we rewrite the *Commitment to Peacemaking* to make it more appropriate to our vision of our peacemaking work?

A congregation or other entity may adapt the *Commitment* in any way it believes will more accurately reflect its peacemaking ministries, provided the revisions are consistent with *Peacemaking: The Believers' Calling*. In considering whether to rewrite the *Commitment*, it may prove helpful to remember that peacemaking is done in a variety of arenas: self, family, congregation, community, the global neighborhood, and the environment. It includes concern for racial and economic justice and human rights in the United States as well as internationally.






How might a session or other body decide to adopt the *Commitment to Peacemaking*?

Because of its importance, a period of study and reflection may prove helpful in making this decision. Different groups will need to design a study reflection process appropriate to their needs. Such a process might include:







-  **Study**—This could involve studying biblical passages proclaiming God’s peace-giving and God’s call to peacemaking, the *Commitment to Peacemaking*, *Peacemaking: The Believers’ Calling*, and other material. It could also involve reviewing the ongoing peacemaking ministries of the congregation or other entity. Members of the congregation or other entity could lead this study. Leadership might also come from a presbytery committee dealing with peacemaking or from congregations or entities that have already adopted the *Commitment*.
-  **Decide**—This could involve voting or establishing consensus or whatever method is appropriate.
-  **Plan**—Once the *Commitment* has been made, planning to implement the *Commitment* could be done in ways appropriate to the congregation or other entity.
-  **Inform the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program and the presbytery committee with peacemaking responsibility**—The Presbyterian Peacemaking Program in the General Assembly Council’s offices in Louisville, Kentucky, is prepared to send information and materials that will be helpful to peacemaking efforts. Congregations and other entities that have adopted the *Commitment to Peacemaking* will receive the newsletter *Peace Notes* that is published four times a year. The Presbyterian Peacemaking Program has a variety of other resources available. Presbytery committees with responsibility for peacemaking may also provide useful assistance.

Peacemaking in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

Rooted in the Reformed tradition, Presbyterians affirm God’s sovereignty over all of life. Thus Presbyterians have always engaged in seeking justice that included working for peace. Significant steps in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s peacemaking journey include:

-  192nd General Assembly (1980) of the United Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) adopted *Peacemaking: The Believers’ Calling* acknowledging the centrality of God’s peace-giving, recognizing past peacemaking efforts of Presbyterians and affirming peacemaking as an integral, ongoing part of the life and mission of all governing bodies of the Presbyterian Church and of individual Presbyterians.
-  121st General Assembly (1981) of the Presbyterian Church in the United States adopted *Peacemaking: The Believers’ Calling – An Affirmation of Policy and Direction*.
-  195th General Assembly (1983) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) urged each session to consider affirming a commitment integrating peacemaking into the life and mission of the congregation.
-  201st General Assembly (1989) designated peacemaking a continuing goal of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).
-  214th General Assembly (2002) amended the *Commitment to Peacemaking* so that other entities (presbyteries, synods, Presbyterian Women’s groups and more) might express their commitment to peacemaking.

Making the Commitment to Peacemaking

-  **declares** that becoming a part of God's peace-giving is a mission priority of the congregation or other entity;
-  **challenges** a congregation or other entity to grow on its peacemaking journey;
-  **establishes** a framework for planning and implementing peacemaking in every aspect of the ministry of the congregation or other entity;
-  **invites** Presbyterians to work for peace in their own lives, their families, their community, and the international arena;
-  **provides** a means for evaluating peacemaking efforts; and
-  **encourages** contact and cooperation with other Presbyterian congregations and entities and individuals and communities in other denominations and faiths involved in peacemaking.

To Report Your Commitment to Peacemaking

Please return to the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program, 100 Witherspoon Street, Louisville, 40202-1396.

Responding to God's Covenant, _____ now commits itself to peacemaking.

Signed: _____
Moderator/Chairperson Date

Signed: _____
Clerk/Secretary Date

Name of Church/Entity: _____

PIN Number (if applicable): _____

Street: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ E-mail: _____

A contact person for the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program and the presbytery peacemaking committee is:

Name: _____

Street: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ E-mail: _____

Is there help available as we implement our commitment to peacemaking?


God, who gave us the ministry of reconciliation, is the greatest source of strength and power as we work for peace. Through prayer, study, and action, we experience God's peacemaking in our own lives and throughout the world.


Many presbyteries have a committee working on peacemaking issues that is able to help


you implement your commitment to peacemaking. Such a committee can also tell you which other congregations and entities in your presbytery have made such a commitment.

The Presbyterian Peacemaking Program produces a variety of resources to support your peacemaking ministries.

Basic peacemaking resources may be ordered by calling Presbyterian Distribution Service at 800-524-2612 or by going online at www.pcusa.org/marketplace.

 *Peacemaking: The Believers' Calling*, PDS #OGA-88-047, \$1.50 plus s/h.

 *Commitment to Peacemaking brochure*, PDS #70-270-03-024, free plus s/h.

 *Doing Peacemaking: Implementing the Commitment to Peacemaking in your Congregation, Third Edition*, PDS #70-270-098-011, \$1.00 plus s/h.

Created in 1980, the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program assists the church as it responds to the gospel calling to "seek peace and pursue it" through:

-  **Intergenerational Conferences**
-  **International Peacemakers and Travel Study Seminars**
-  **Leadership Development and Support**
-  **The Presbyterian United Nations Office**
-  **Resources and Publications**
-  **Young Adult Peacemaking Leadership Development**

Contact the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program

Call

888-728-7228, ext. 5788

Write

Presbyterian Peacemaking Program
100 Witherspoon St., Room 1624A
Louisville, Kentucky 40202-1396

Bookmark

www.pcusa.org/peacemaking



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