

Church of the Brethren

The Church of the Brethren has a long history of making peace. Yet the work has not been finished; God's vision of a peaceful and just world is still not a reality.

Wars continue to rage in dozens of countries. Some 20 million children have been killed, wounded or displaced by war in the past 10 years alone. Closer to home, one-quarter of all young women will face physical or psychological violence in a dating relationship, and one in 25 children misses a day of school a month for fear of being bullied. Meanwhile, the US government spends 100 times more on its military than it does on aiding the world's poor, 1.5 billion of whom live on less than \$1 a day.

The Church of the Brethren's peace conviction is firmly rooted in the New Testament, and more specifically in Jesus' teachings on loving our enemies (Matt. 5:44, Luke 6:27) and Paul's admonition that Christians seek to live peaceably with all and that they strive to "overcome evil with good" (Rom. 12:21). The Church of the Brethren respond to the call to peacemaking in many ways.

- The church continues to counsel conscientious objection to war instead of participation in the military.
- Faith Expeditions provide opportunities to visit war-torn areas or places where justice is denied God's children.
- The Youth Peace Travel Team visits Brethren summer camps, where the team of four young adults inspires their peers to make peace.
- Christian Citizenship Seminar provides high school age students the chance to explore the relationship between faith and a particular political issue.
- Economic injustices are often the cause of conflict. One of the ways Brethren express their commitment to economic justice is through the Global Food Crisis Fund, which works to assure that God's people everywhere have the opportunity to live the full life that God intends.
- Advocacy Action Alerts educate readers about current events and issues, inviting readers to express their spiritual beliefs through tangible action.

Over the years the church voting in its Annual Conference has taken a public stand on matters of peace and conflict.

- 1991 Statement, Peacemaking: The Calling of God's People in History
- 2000 Resolution, Affirmation of the World Council of Church's Decade to Overcome Violence
- 2003 Call For a Living Peace Church
- 2004 Resolution on Iraq
- 2006 Iraq Resolution
- 2006 Divestment from Companies Selling Products Used as Weapons in Israel and Palestine Resolution

The Church of the Brethren General Board (now the Ministry and Mission Board) approved the following resolutions:

- 2001 Resolution on the Events and Aftermath of September 11, 2001
- 2002 Statement on the Threat of War Between the United States and Iraq
- 2002 Declaración de la Junta nacional sobre Irak

The peace work of the church is carried out formally by both the Church of the Brethren and On Earth Peace. Bethany Theological Seminary offers courses on Brethren history and peacemaking. The following Brethren-related colleges offer peace studies programs: Elizabethtown College, Juniata College, Manchester College, and the University of La Verne.