

Justice & Peacemaking Committee

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JUSTICE & PEACEMAKING COMMITTEE

Approved by Session June 21, 2015

Purpose

To advocate and work for justice and peace, in accordance with the principles and goals affirmed in the document, "A Social Creed for the 21st Century," approved by the Presbyterian Mission Agency's Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy at the 218th General Assembly of the PC(USA) in 2008, which is attached and incorporated by reference into this committee description.

Responsibilities

1. Fulfill the responsibilities set forth in the General Guidelines for All Standing Committees.
2. Provide educational opportunities for the congregation to understand and grow in knowledge of the biblical and denominational basis for a justice and peacemaking ministry.
3. Identify, evaluate, present, and recommend to the congregation local, national and international opportunities for ministries, programs and activities that promote justice and peace.
4. Advocate for policies that promote justice and peace to appropriate local, state and national governmental bodies and implementing agencies.
5. Seek out and enter into partnerships with other faith communities, agencies or groups to work toward the common goals of justice and peace.
6. Engage in dialogue, education, programs and other activities with others in our community, nation and world in an effort to increase understanding and build relationships that facilitate justice and peace.
7. Recruit volunteers to participate in justice and peacemaking ministries and activities.
8. Communicate regularly with the congregation the work and needs of the justice and peacemaking ministries through email, newsletter, bulletin, church blog, social media, bulletin boards and worship services.
9. Upon request, provide input to the Personnel Committee concerning the work of the Pastors and Staff, in order to facilitate the annual review of the Pastors and Staff.
10. Evaluate regularly all work, activities, events, programs, and materials for which the committee is responsible, looking to further strengthen successful ministries and eliminate or change those that are judged not successful. Make time to envision new ministries and new ways of approaching committee responsibilities.

A Social Creed for the 21st Century

We Churches of the United States have a message of hope for a fearful time. Just as the churches responded to the harshness of early 20th Century industrialization with a prophetic “Social Creed” in 1908, so in our era of globalization we offer a vision of a society that shares more and consumes less, seeks compassion over suspicion and equality over domination, and finds security in joined hands rather than massed arms. Inspired by Isaiah’s vision of a “peaceable kingdom,” we honor the dignity of every person and the intrinsic value of every creature, and pray and work for the day when none “labor in vain or bear children for calamity” (Isaiah 65:23). We do so as disciples of the One who came “that all may have life, and have it abundantly” (John 10:10), and stand in solidarity with Christians and with all who strive for justice around the globe.

In faith, responding to our Creator, we celebrate the full humanity of each woman, man, and child, all created in the divine image as individuals of infinite worth, by working for:

- Full civil, political and economic rights for women and men of all races.
- Abolition of forced labor, human trafficking, and the exploitation of children.
- Employment for all, at a family-sustaining living wage, with equal pay for comparable work.
- The rights of workers to organize, and to share in workplace decisions and productivity growth.
- Protection from dangerous working conditions, with time and benefits to enable full family life.
- A system of criminal rehabilitation, based on restorative justice and an end to the death penalty.

In the love incarnate in Jesus, despite the world’s sufferings and evils, we honor the deep connections within our human family and seek to awaken a new spirit of community, by working for:

- Abatement of hunger and poverty, and enactment of policies benefiting the most vulnerable.
- High quality public education for all and universal, affordable and accessible healthcare.
- An effective program of social security during sickness, disability and old age.
- Tax and budget policies that reduce disparities between rich and poor, strengthen democracy, and provide greater opportunity for everyone within the common good.
- Just immigration policies that protect family unity, safeguard workers’ rights, require employer accountability, and foster international cooperation.
- Sustainable communities marked by affordable housing, access to good jobs, and public safety.
- Public service as a high vocation, with real limits on the power of private interests in politics.

In hope sustained by the Holy Spirit, we pledge to be peacemakers in the world and stewards of God’s good creation, by working for:

- Adoption of simpler lifestyles for those who have enough; grace over greed in economic life.
- Access for all to clean air and water and healthy food, through wise care of land and technology.

- Sustainable use of earth's resources, promoting alternative energy sources and public transportation with binding covenants to reduce global warming and protect populations most affected.
- Equitable global trade and aid that protects local economies, cultures and livelihoods.
- Peacemaking through multilateral diplomacy rather than unilateral force, the abolition of torture, and a strengthening of the United Nations and the rule of international law.
- Nuclear disarmament and redirection of military spending to more peaceful and productive uses.
- Cooperation and dialogue for peace and environmental justice among the world's religions.

We — individual Christians and churches — commit ourselves to a culture of peace and freedom that embraces non-violence, nurtures character, treasures the environment, and builds community, rooted in a spirituality of inner growth with outward action. We make this commitment together — as members of Christ's body, led by the one Spirit — trusting in the God who makes all things new.

Bread for the World Coordinator

Note

Beginning in 2015 responsibility to coordinate Guilford Park's support for Bread for the World was transferred from the Mission Committee to the Justice and Peacemaking Committee. We are grateful for this process that was created by the Mission Committee.

Purpose

To provide the coordination of the Bread for the World.

Accountability

Accountable to the Justice and Peacemaking Committee.

Relationships

Working with the congregation.

Responsibilities

1. Determine date for Offering of Letters (do this early in year so it can be placed on worship calendar)
2. Order Offering of Letters kit, including bulletin inserts and other resources
3. Discuss with pastor your purpose and seek any advice regarding avenues for coordinated publicity. Also look for opportunities for coordinated activities with other committee members.
4. Promote in Guidepost, bulletin, and Minute for Mission.
5. Gather needed materials i.e. paper, pens, envelopes, and place in pews. Buy stamps or have office by stamps.
6. Recruit needed volunteers to help on Offering of Letters Sunday to help stamp and count letters.
7. Expand advocacy for BFW issues beyond the Offering of Letters as appropriate.
8. Assist the committee with evaluation.
9. Assist the committee with training the next coordinator.

Needed Talents Skills, and Knowledge

Benefits

The joy of serving God through the mission and ministry of your church.

Evaluation

The program or activity will be evaluated at least annually by the committee.

Approved by the Mission Committee: 2007