Peace & Global Witness 2017

**Proclaim the Peace of Christ**

Ephesians 2:14-17

“So he came and proclaimed peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near.”

The letter to the Ephesians tells us that Jesus came to proclaim a peace that is universal. While the earthly ministry of Jesus was in a specific age and place, the peace he shared is limited by neither time nor geography. As followers of Christ, our call to witness/work for peace begins in our own neighborhoods and extends to the ends of the earth. It is a demanding call, but it is one that Presbyterians at all levels of the church are seeking to follow.

The Peace & Global Witness Offering exists to support the holistic and wide-ranging witness of the whole church.

At the national level, this witness is done in direct support of those working to heal the divisions in violent contexts like South Sudan. It means creating educational materials that equip congregations to deal with important issues, from disagreements between members of session to bullying to gun violence. It means bringing leaders together who have made a profound witness for peace around the world and deploying them as a resource to congregations like yours and leaders like you. And it means speaking up for the vulnerable around the world through a seat at the United Nations table. The Offering strengthens the collaboration of the Peacemaking Program and the Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations with the reconciliation work of global partners through World Mission.

Yet the Offering is as much about your local congregation’s living out a commitment to peacemaking, proclaiming Christ’s peace. Twenty-five percent of the Offering stays in your local congregation and 25 percent is retained by your mid council. The ways congregations engage this work speak to the strengths of each congregation and the context where they see the need. It has meant supporting the work of a mission co-worker in finding reconciliation in difficult international contexts. It has meant two pastors in Texas starting an organization that seeks civility in political discourse. It has meant scholarships for students recognized as peacemakers, resettlement of refugees, and support for shelters where those who are abused may find refuge.

The Peace & Global Witness Offering sustains a witness in many forms and at every level of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), but all are bound together in Christ. Together they are a living proclamation of the peace we know in Christ, who puts an end to hostilities and speaks peace to those near and far.

This Leader’s Guide is a resource for you and your congregation to support your witness for peace and participation in the Offering. We hope it provides insight into the work done at multiple levels of the church and offers inspiration from other congregations and ideas for how your congregation can access resources and live out its commitment to peace, amplifying our proclamation and making known the peace we have in Christ.