

A Just Peace Church Resolution

January 1990

A resolution on a Just Peace Church, Plymouth Congregational Church, UCC

Biblical/Theological Background

The biblical description of a world faithful to God is a world of justice, peace, and well being as seen in many references in the Bible including Isaiah 9:1-7, 11:1-9, Micah 4:1-4. The Hebrew word for this is “shalom.”

Central to the biblical story is God’s liberation of our Hebrew forebears and God’s calling them to become a community which exemplified shalom (a symbol of which was that the most vulnerable people in that society: the widow, orphan, and sojourner were to be protected and cared for.)

God sent the only Son as the Prince of Peace, calling forth good will toward all, blessing the peacemakers, and holding up the commandment to love God above all else and one’s neighbor as one’s self.

We understand that as the Church of Jesus Christ we are called to be the body of Christ, to carry out the will and way of our Lord and Savior.

Whereas war in the present age is not a viable option for settling disputes and could well destroy all life on earth, and

Whereas peace without justice can only be imposed by force, and,

Whereas the promotion of justice and peace has been a party of Plymouth Church’s ministry through prayer, education, advocacy, and mission support in carrying out the Plymouth Church Bylaws (Article II Purpose) “...to render loving service toward all people and to strive for righteousness, justice, and peace.” and,

Whereas we recognize our personal need and the need of our fellow human beings for justice and peace,

Be it resolved that Plymouth Congregational church, United Church of Christ declare itself to be a Just Peace Church. This shall mean that in and through all aspects of our corporate life we will hold up and work on behalf of God’s Just Peace. In a climate of openness where all points of view can be shared, we will seek ways in which we as a church and as individuals can promote justice and peace in our lives, in the life of our community and in the world.

This resolution **will be implemented through:**

Worship

Celebrating the gift of God's shalom in our lives.

Seeking forgiveness for sin and redirection and courage to live in and work on behalf of God's peace.

Bringing the needs and perspective of other peoples into our worship and prayer life understanding that we are a global community.

Education and Program

Sponsoring education and action opportunities for adults and children on topics of justice and peace, which might include:

Seminars on parenting for peace, biblical and theological basis for a just peace,

A periodic "Impact Sunday" which would provide information, discussion opportunity and action suggestions regarding specific local, national, or international issues.

Receiving the *Just Peace offering yearly and using the local portion to promote awareness and activity on behalf of a just peace.

Keeping the vision before us in ways which might include:

Flying the Earth Flag,

Planting a peace pole,

Displaying posters and banners,

Notifying the congregation of events and programs in the community which celebrate or foster the building of a just peace.

*The Just Peace offering is one of six "Recognized Special Offerings" authorized by the United Church of Christ. 25% of this offering is used by the local church for work in areas of justice and peace, 25% is used in the conference and the balance used by the national structures of the church.