

September 30, 2003

To: The Ministers and Members of the SCNC United Church of Christ
From: The SCNCUCC Just Peace Resolution Task Group

Dear Colleagues and Friends:

At the UCC Annual Gathering last June, a resolution was passed asking churches to revitalize the Just Peace Movement. The Just Peace vision is a hallmark of the UCC theological identity and for nearly two decades the Just Peace program has been a grassroots movement of UCC congregations proclaiming a public identity as a justice doing and peace seeking church. Now more than ever the Just Peace movement is needed.

Representatives from each Association have met and are ready to respond to the resolution and assist interested congregations who wish to respond to the resolution and assist interested congregations who wish to respond to the resolution. The resolution suggests that churches study the process of becoming a Just Peace Church or revisit the process and affirm being a Just Peace Church.

There is a resource list available at the Conference office which includes:

- Start up materials
- A six session study outline for those interested in becoming a Just Peace Church
- Suggestions for Just Peace action
- Suggestions for Just Peace religious education
- Peace and Justice organizations
- Worship materials
- Biblical and theological basis
- Book list and articles
- Children's books and resources websites

We are also suggesting that each congregation revive Just Peace Sunday. It is hoped January 18, 2004, the day before Martin Luther King Holiday, will be celebrated in as many churches as possible as Just Peace Sunday. Please let us know if we can help you and do let us know what actions and activities are happening in your church.

Blessings and peace,

The Just Peace Task Group
Ann Appley, Anne Cohen, Art Cribbs, Sharon Graff and Dave Smith

AN EMERGENCY RESOLUTION: “A JUST PEACE CHURCH”

Submitted by the Executive Committee of the Central Association:

Lloyd Ishimaru, Moderator; Kurt Traugott, Vice-Moderator; Jolene Cadenbach, Registrar; Paul Lance, Ass't Treasurer; Ann Appley, Church & Ministry A; Kit Wilke, Church & Ministry B; Myrna Pappas, Youth; and Elsa Seifert, Resource Coordinator.

BACKGROUND: Three months ago, the social fabric of our society began to tear along lines of anti-war and pro-invasion sympathies as American and British troops prepared to invade Iraq. The stated goals at that time were to bring about a regime change from Saddam Hussein's Baath party, to promote national security from Middle East terrorism, and to enforce the United Nations' deadline for a full accounting by Iraq of its weapons of mass destruction.

The polarization of proponents and opponents of the war in Iraq took the streets by storm and took many of our churches by surprise. This resolution addresses an issue which has arisen too recently to be addressed in the regular time-frame of the resolution process. In the midst and aftermath of the war in Iraq, ministers and members of our churches find themselves praying for the soldiers and their families as well as reconsidering the motives and social movements which led us into war. The invasion of Iraq by U.S.-led Coalition forces, together with the perception that it represents God's will being done by the United States in a Christian crusade against evil, is the event to which this resolution responds.

Following the tragic events of September 11, 2001, the nations of the world have focused on the potential of additional attacks by organized militant groups or nations and have reacted to that possibility. The result has been an escalation of apprehension and rhetoric, as well as direct American involvement in two wars: Afghanistan and Iraq.

The Central Association of the SCNC/UCC voted to its Spring Meeting on May 10, 2003, to encourage the congregations within its region to **“study the Just Peace church movement, the justice of war in the present historical context, and to determine appropriate courses of action for that local church.”** They further instructed the Executive Committee to prepare this resolution for consideration and action by all churches of the Conference to the end that as many as possible go on the record as “Just Peace” congregations. Hence, we submit the following resolution for consideration and vote:

RESOLUTION: The Southern California Nevada Conference of the United Church of Christ reaffirms itself as a “Just Peace” Conference and encourages the congregations within its region to study the Just Peace church movement and the justice of war in our present historical context, and to determine appropriate courses of action for that local church, to the end that as many as possible go on record as “Just Peace” congregations. The Southern California Nevada Conference of the United Church of Christ will develop and provide opportunities through its Associations for local congregations to work toward reaffirming or becoming Just Peace Churches. We further ask for a report of progress in this matter at the Annual Gathering in 2004.

Passed June 21, 2003