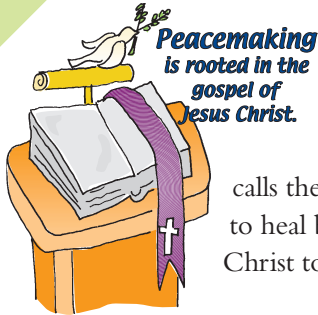


Peacemaking 101

BY MARK KOENIG



Peacemaking is rooted in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Peace is a gift from God. The biblical vision of peace encompasses the justice and well-being that God intends for all creation. In a world wounded by sin, God offers healing, wholeness, mercy and justice. God calls the followers of Jesus Christ to share the gospel message of peace by seeking to heal brokenness wherever we encounter it. God calls the followers of Jesus Christ to be peacemakers.



Peacemaking is our calling in all arenas of life.

Peace is not just the absence of war or conflict. The biblical concept of shalom proclaims that peace involves wholeness and right relationships in all of life. Peacemakers seek to offer peace wherever we encounter brokenness—in individual lives, families, congregations and communities, between nations and with creation.

Peacemaking is not just the ministry of individuals or a committee. Effective peacemaking is integrated throughout the life of congregations and governing bodies, in worship and educational experiences, in the ministries of various groups and committees, and in the way things are done and the ways people relate to one another.

Peacemaking is the task of the whole church.



Peacemaking is an enterprise of justice.

Peace will never be achieved as long as injustice exists. Biblical witness repeatedly affirms that those who are committed to peace are called to stand with those who are poor, oppressed and disadvantaged, and to advocate for justice for all of God's creation. Peacemakers confront injustice wherever it is encountered and work for change.

Peacemakers work out of their experience of God's peace in Jesus Christ. Individually, we know God's peace as salvation. Corporately, we share that peace when we engage in ministries that promote justice and righteousness. When we support safe houses for battered women, build bridges of understanding across the chasm of racism, advocate for laws that promote just and equitable lives for all people, partner with sisters and brothers in Christ around the world, we connect peacemaking and evangelism.



Peacemaking is a lifelong journey.



Peacemaking is working in partnership.

We stand on the shoulders of those who have gone before us. We find partners in ministry in our families, congregations, communities, denominations and faith-based and secular organizations in this country and around the world. We pray for each other, cooperate on projects and provide encouragement as we each seek to respond to God's call. Peacemakers may work individually but they rarely work alone.

Illustrations by Carol Cornette

An old union song reminds us that “step by step, the longest march can be won.”

Peacemaking is a long-haul commitment to a way of living, not a program that is done once and for all. At different times, faced with different situations, we engage in different ministries of peacemaking. Peacemakers recognize that individuals, congregations and groups are at different places on the journey to peace and seek to meet them where they are.



Peacemaking is proclaiming Good News.



Celebrating the International Day of Peace September 21, 2005

International Day of Peace Vigil
www.idpvigil.com

In 2001, the United Nations General Assembly unanimously adopted a resolution designating September 21st of each year as an International Day of Peace. The intention of the resolution is to have the entire world observe a day of peace and nonviolence.

An ever-expanding number of people worldwide, representing a wide variety of religious and spiritual traditions, have committed to the task of working with other like-minded individuals and groups for an International Day of Peace Vigil, “to encourage worldwide, 24-hour spiritual observations for peace and nonviolence on the International Day of Peace, September 21, 2005, in every house of worship and place of spiritual practice, by all religious and spiritually-based groups and individuals, and by all men, women and children who seek peace in the world.”

This global 24-hour spiritual observation for peace is meant to demonstrate the power of prayer and other spiritual practices in promoting peace and preventing violent conflict. These worldwide spiritual observances will also help raise public awareness of the International Day of Peace and directly support the establishment of a global cease-fire.



Peacemaking is joyous and hopeful.

Peacemakers are well aware of humanity’s potential for sin. While recognizing the ever-present potential to sin, peacemakers are people of hope, connected to God’s vision of peace that reminds us the world does not need to be the way it is. God’s vision calls us to imagine new possibilities. God’s vision sustains us as we work to bring those possibilities into reality, reminding us that God’s will *will* be done.

Peacemaking involves laughter, smiles, dancing and singing. Peacemakers make wonderful colleagues and friends. Celebrating small steps, little victories and moments of grace helps sustain peacemakers for the long journey to peace.



Peacemaking is fun.



Peacemaking is best done peaceably.

The ends are always inherent in the means.

Peacemaking is not just about what we do, it is about how we live and how we relate to others. Peacemakers do not avoid conflict but develop healthy processes for working through conflict and skills for dealing with tough issues. Respect for others, especially those with whom we disagree, is key to peacemaking.

Peacemaking is an act of trust.



Inspired by God’s vision, peacemakers engage in ministry using the gifts God has given to us.

Peacemakers seek to bring God’s promised future into being, trusting God to guide and bless our efforts—sometimes in ways we cannot even begin to imagine! 🍀

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