

Justice and Peace Covenant 1989

First Congregational UCC Naperville

As members of the First Congregational, United Church of Christ, Naperville, Illinois, we covenant to work together for the making of peace with justice in our homes, our church, our community, our nation and our world. We shall strive for justice and peace through the inward journeys of spiritual nurture, and education; and the outward journeys of outreach and political action.

The Inward Journey of Spiritual Nurture

Recognizing one foundation in Jesus Christ who is our peace, we shall in prayer, worship, and searching the scripture:

- Develop awareness of God's peace giving and the needs and opportunities to promote just peace
- Nurture and celebrate hope which gives people strength to change the world even when margins of success seem slim
- Reflect on the biblical and theological perspectives of peace-making
- Be God's human partners in serving and redeeming the world so that the church works with unleashed adventure and creativity to build a new reality - offering the world an alternative way of life - the way of justice and peace.

The Inward Journey of Education

Recognizing that there are no easy answers to the problems of justice and peace, we shall educate

- Encouraging our youth to grow in ways of peace and justice through the church school curriculum, the annual youth work camp, and by supporting each other in peaceful family living
- Publishing and exhibiting examples of successful justice and peace-making efforts plus dispensing literature to the congregation
- Providing programs on related subjects to groups within the church
- Establishing a library shelf stocked with books, magazines and pamphlets pertaining to issues of justice and peace
- Making short, concise progress reports in church services on a quarterly basis.

The Outward Journey of Community Outreach

Recognizing that we are a part of a larger community, we strive as a congregation to:

- Support a continued and strong commitment to mission spending at the level of 25% of our annual income or more, as our finances will allow
- Make a Just Peace Offering annually and retain 25% to promote justice and peace locally
- Join with other groups in demonstrating, individually or collectively, our beliefs in justice and peace
- Support church members who volunteer in community programs that promote justice and peace, such as PADS, FISH, Little Friends, and Family Shelter Services
- Stimulate community awareness of justice and peace issues by making available to our congregation bumper stickers, posters, or other publicity materials
- Act as a clearing house where all people will feel comfortable bringing their concerns for justice and peace
- Affirm the ministry of all Christians and support those who accept that call as a professional choice.

The Outward Journey of Political Action

We agree to:

- Be a church where openness and diversity of opinions are encouraged and respected
- Inform ourselves about issues of justice and peace by holding open forums, passing on information that comes from UCC national instrumentalities, Illinois Conference of the UCC, Chicago Metropolitan Association of the Illinois Conference UCC, and the Justice and Peace Network of the Illinois Conference UCC
- Provide opportunities for political involvement such as: letter writing tables (diverse opinions welcomed), encouraging voter registration, and encouraging Christians to seek elective and appointive office at all levels of government.

This we covenant to do in our effort to be faithful to God's call in Jesus Christ, to seek ways of justice and peace as a congregation.

By vote of the congregation in January 1989.