

1994 Peace Vocation Statement

In 1993 the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland passed a resolution urging the Peace and Peacemaking Committee to 'proceed with drawing up a programme of proposals for developing our Christian vocation to be peacemakers in a troubled world'. Part of the outworking of this included the development of the 'Peace Vocation Statement'* , which was adopted by the General Assembly on 8th June 1994.

We, members of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland,
called by God,
in the grace of Jesus Christ,
and the power of the Holy Spirit,
to live in faith, hope and love,
as children of our heavenly Father,
and witnesses to God's Kingdom ,
publicly acknowledge our vocation to peace,
which is both the gift and mission placed on us by God.

We believe that the same evangelical faith in Jesus Christ,
which emboldens us to pray to God as our heavenly Father,
challenges us to develop radically new attitudes and relationships
with our neighbours in Ireland.

We affirm that to be Christian peacemakers in our own situation:
We must grasp more clearly the distinctive teaching of our Lord
which challenges the general practice of our world,
and breaks the vicious cycle of matching injury with injury,
hate with hate, ignorance with ignorance.
We must therefore be prepared to meet and talk together:
with those in our own church with whom we have disagreements;
with those from churches whose practices and beliefs differ from our own;
with those from whom we are politically divided.

We affirm that to be Christian peacemakers in our own situation:
we must recognise the responsibility given by God to government,
and to those who serve the cause of law and order,
so as to encourage well-doing, correct evil-doers, and protect the innocent.
We must therefore reject violence;
seek ways to advance justice and promote the welfare of the needy;
affirm that in democratic societies all citizens are called
to share in these responsibilities;
and encourage all efforts to establish new structures of consent
and participation.

We affirm that to be Christian peacemakers in our own situation:
We must be initiators of programmes of action
which will contribute to peace in our community.
We must therefore provide resources and encouragement to
enable congregations to move forward at the local level in
the field of inter-community relations.

We understand peacemaking to be an affirmation
and accommodation of diversity,
and that our particular history in this land of divided communities
and recurring violence,
of mutual suspicion, fear and injury,
makes it imperative that we reassert the Church's own proper calling
to seek peace, and the things that make for peace
in our day.

*A revised version of the Peace Vocation Statement, the 'Vision for Society Statement', which supersedes this statement, was adopted by the 2016 General Assembly.