

**TITLE: Active Nonviolence Training**

**DATE SUBMITTED:** March 2, 2009

**JOINTLY SUBMITTED BY: Robbinsdale United Church of Christ**  
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**SUMMARY OF INTENT:** Because we have declared ourselves to be Peace with Justice congregations and have engaged in over 20 years of peacemaking activities and advocacy ministry, we pledge to continue our commitment to the Gospel movement begun by Jesus Christ to use active nonviolence as a method for bringing love and light into the world. *“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.” –Matthew 5:9*

The attached resolutions have 2 objectives:

1. To recommit, at the national level and at the level of individual congregations, to continue to observe the United Nations’ Decade for a Culture of Peace and Nonviolence for the World through prayer, action, and study of “the things that make for peace” (Luke 19:42)
2. To ask each church to encourage its members to commit to nonviolent and peaceable behavior in their relationships with others – at home, at school, at work, at church, in the community and wherever they find themselves.

A key method to accomplishing these objectives is to offer peacemaking training at the congregational level. The peacemaking training sequence, “Creating a Culture of Peace,” is specifically highlighted as an effective tool, and resolutions are therefore offered on it.

### **Rationale & Background**

We are approaching the end of the United Nations “Decade for a Culture of Peace and Nonviolence.” Active Nonviolence is quickly becoming an established and well-respected spiritual formation and academic discipline that provides effective alternatives to violence and injustice, promoting both personal and cultural transformation. Congregations and individuals can become visible models for peacemaking in problem-solving in our violent society.

The peacemaking training of Active Nonviolence is an important way to counter the violence at all levels of our culture and in the global environment --from our homes and schools to the international scene. To that end, the peacemaking training program “Creating a Culture of Peace” (CCP) is a dynamic tool. It builds on the nonviolent teachings of Jesus of Nazareth. It also reflects peacemakers such as Mohandas Gandhi, Dorothy Day, Coretta Scott King and Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., Desmond Tutu, Margaret Lawrence, and Rosa Parks.

### **FUNDING IMPLICATIONS**

No funding is required for this resolution. Each CCP training ought to pay for itself.

1 **Part One: Resolutions on the Decade for a Culture of Peace and Nonviolence**

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3 *Be It Resolved:* That the Minnesota Conference, UCC joins with other faith communities in affirming and  
4 observing the United Nations’ Decade for a Culture of Peace and Nonviolence for the World through  
5 prayer, action, and study of “the things that make for peace” (Luke 19:42). We will promote a culture of  
6 nonviolence which values love, compassion, and justice, and rejects violence as a means of solving  
7 problems.  
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9 *Be It Further Resolved:* That the Minnesota Conference, UCC provide resources and opportunities for  
10 worship, study, and action that promote the development of a culture of peace and nonviolence at all levels  
11 of society. Resources will include options to involve local churches, ministries of the Conference, plus  
12 peace, justice, and educational networks. Materials will reference the unique gifts of peace and justice of  
13 the faith community in its history, theology, and practice.  
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15 *Be It Further Resolved:* That the Annual Meeting of the Minnesota Conference, UCC send this resolution  
16 with letters of encouragement to our elected officials, denominational leaders, and the Secretary General of  
17 the United Nations.  
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20 **Part Two: Resolution for Adopting “Creating a Culture of Peace” as a Congregational Training**  
21 **Program**

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23 *Be It Resolved:* That each congregation in the Minnesota Conference, UCC make available the “Creating a  
24 Culture of Peace” (CCP) training program to their members and their community to assist them in  
25 addressing conflicts, controversies, and divisions; to respond to violence, oppression, and injustice at all  
26 levels, including issues of racism, social and economic injustice, crime, and domestic violence. Where  
27 possible, each will create trainings that represent a diversity of perspectives within communities, including  
28 intergenerational trainings for youth and adults.  
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30 *Be It Further Resolved:* That each congregation or ministry of the conference taking “Creating a Culture of  
31 Peace” (CCP) training engage in Community Building and Action Planning to develop defined action plans  
32 and projects they can do nonviolently in response to issues of peace and justice which concern them. Where  
33 possible, they are encouraged to partner with secular, interfaith, and ecumenical action campaigns working  
34 on similar issues.  
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36 *Be It Further Resolved:* That each congregation support the spread of CCP training for United Church of  
37 Christ communities by identifying candidates to attend trainings and become trained facilitators in the  
38 Conference, thus expanding the network of facilitators; and by considering how Active Nonviolence  
39 training may be included in current and future spiritual formation programs.  
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41 *Be It Further Resolved:* All information pertinent to organizing a CCP training be posted on the Minnesota  
42 Conference, UCC website, including names of available facilitators and a schedule of current trainings.  
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45 **Part Three: Resolutions on Personal Commitments to Nonviolence as Outcomes of Congregational**  
46 **Discussions and Programs**

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48 *Be It Resolved:* That each congregation in the Minnesota Conference, United Church of Christ encourage  
49 its members to commit to nonviolent and peaceable behavior in their relationships with others – at home, at  
50 school, at work, at church, in the community and wherever they find themselves.  
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52 *Be It Further Resolved:* That every congregation also encourage its members to adopt the Pledge of  
53 Nonviolence as it comes from the Institute of Peace and Justice in St. Louis, MO:

- 54 • *To become, with God's help, a nonviolent and peaceable person.*
- 55 • *To respect myself, to affirm others, and avoid uncaring criticism, hateful words, physical attacks,*  
56 *and self-destructive behavior.*
- 57 • *To share my feelings honestly, to look for safe ways to express my anger, and to work at solving*  
58 *problems peacefully.*