

## What Can Individuals Do?

- \* Create a plan for peace to use at home, at school, in your neighborhood, in your congregation, and in places of work.
- \* List things you do each day or week that contribute to a peaceful family, community, and world.
- \* Plan a time for confession and reconciliation with those closest to you. Ask for forgiveness and extend forgiveness to others.
- \* Practice weekly affirmation of those closest to you. Focus on words and actions.
- \* Consider the impact of toys, games, television, and material goods designed for children and youth. Advocate for products designed and produced with peace and justice issues in mind.

## Join with Others

Working together is key in our efforts during the Decade. Working ecumenically, with community groups, and with non-governmental organizations (NGOS), can enrich and enhance our efforts. Visit [www.elca.org/nonviolence](http://www.elca.org/nonviolence) for a listing of web sites and contact information for a variety of groups that may be helpful.

- \* **Every Church a Peace Church**—a grassroots ecumenical network. Call 717/859-1958.
- \* **Families Against Violence Advocacy Network**—Call 314/533-4445.
- \* **World Council of Churches Decade to Overcome Violence**—Visit [www.wcc-coe.org](http://www.wcc-coe.org)

*This brochure was developed by the ELCA Task Force for the Decade for a Culture of Nonviolence (2001; rev. 2005).*

## Resources

- \* Visit [www.elca.org/nonviolence](http://www.elca.org/nonviolence) for ideas, worship suggestions, and resources.
- \* Visit [www.elca.org/socialstatements/peace](http://www.elca.org/socialstatements/peace) to view *For Peace in God's World*, the ELCA social statement on peace.
- \* Visit [www.elca.org/advocacy](http://www.elca.org/advocacy) for information about advocacy efforts. 202/783-7507
- \* Visit [www.LutheranPeace.org](http://www.LutheranPeace.org) for information about the work of Lutheran Peace Fellowship and an extensive list of peace and nonviolence resources. 206/720-0313
- \* Visit [www.salsa.net/peace](http://www.salsa.net/peace) for information about the work of the peaceCenter. 210/224-4673
- \* Visit [www.ipj-ppj.org](http://www.ipj-ppj.org) for information about the work of the Institute for Peace and Justice. 314/533-4445
- \* Contact Fellowship of Reconciliation at 845/358-4601.
- \* Visit [www.nobelweb.org/eng/index.htm](http://www.nobelweb.org/eng/index.htm) to view of copy of the Appeal of the Nobel Peace Prize Laureates.
- \* Learn more about the decade by visiting [www.unesco.org/cpp/uk/declarations/2000.htm](http://www.unesco.org/cpp/uk/declarations/2000.htm) to discover new declarations and programs of action on a culture of peace.
- \* Go to [www.unesco.org](http://www.unesco.org) and click on "Culture of Peace" to learn more about the decade and to add your name to the Nonviolence Manifesto, a pledge already signed by 70 million people worldwide.

*For more information about the Decade, call 800/638-3522, ext. 2797.*

fast  
pray  
sing  
witness  
advocate  
learn  
model  
risk  
transform  
forgive



2001  
Decade  
for a  
Culture  
of Non-  
Violence  
2010

risk\*transform\*forgive

## What is the Decade?

The Decade originated from the work of twenty Nobel Peace Laureates, among them:

Nelson Mandela,  
Mother Teresa,  
Desmond Tutu,  
and the Dalai Lama,

who appealed to the United Nations (UN). On November 10, 1998, the UN General Assembly voted to designate the years 2001-2010 as "The Decade for a Culture of Peace and Nonviolence for the Children of the World."

The UN Decade focuses on:

- \* the harm and suffering children experience through different forms of violence;
- \* the need to respect the life and dignity of every human being;
- \* the critical role of education in the efforts to build a culture of peace;
- \* the importance of children and youth learning the skills to live safely with each other;
- \* new ways of cooperating with others to form nonviolent individuals and a worldwide culture of peace.

## The ELCA and the Decade

The 1999 ELCA Churchwide Assembly commits this church to work with other churches and organizations to build a Culture of Peace and Nonviolence in the decade 2001 to 2010.

## Why Do We Need This?

*"What is most urgently needed and earnestly to be prayed for in this new year, decade and century is the flowering of a culture of peace within and between nations, communities (ethnic and religious) and in the hearts of all people. The peace of God and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit must be looked to as the foundation for a process of such fundamental cultural change, a change which can be discerned as much in the mandate of the United Nations as in the persistent progress in the ecumenical movement."*

New Year's Message from Dr. Ishmael Noko,  
General Secretary, Lutheran World Federation

## Overcoming Violence in our Culture and the World

- \* Gunfire killed nearly 84,000 children and teens in the United States between 1979 and 1998.
- \* Children are exposed to relentless glorification of violence in movies, television, and the internet.
- \* More than 500,000 women are victims of sexual violence each year in America.
- \* Substance abuse continues to be a major contributing factor to family and community violence.
- \* A child is reported abused or neglected every 12 seconds, i.e. 8,470 per day in the U.S.
- \* The U.S. sells more weapons to more countries than any other nation in the world.

*Source: Children's Defense Fund, The Federation of American Scientists*

## What is Nonviolence?

For many, nonviolence is a way of life that is grounded in a deeply held religious or moral conviction. For others it is a strategy, a method of confronting conflict or oppression in a way that seeks to honor life.

Nonviolence

- \* is a kind of persistent, disciplined, assertive and often courageous good will.
- \* is active confrontation with evil that respects the personhood of an enemy.
- \* seeks both to end the oppression or threat of violence and to reconcile the adversary.

For Christians, nonviolence

- \* is rooted in our understanding of a God who is peace, who gives us peace and calls us to be about making peace with justice.
- \* is a specific way of living out Jesus' teachings and bearing witness to the promise of God.

## What Can the Church Do to Build a Culture of Nonviolence?

- \* Enhance members' understanding of God's peace and the biblical foundation for nonviolence and justice.
- \* Support members' efforts to address current peace and justice issues.
- \* Equip individuals and groups to model lives of nonviolence.
- \* Establish peace education for children and youth as an ongoing priority of the church.
- \* Equip, support and recognize individuals and groups who are leaders in peacemaking efforts in their communities, nation and world.

## What Can Congregations Do?

- \* Study the biblical basis of peacemaking and the meaning of nonviolence.
- \* Help members develop the capacity to engage in creative and respectful conflict.
- \* Include examples of peacemaking in sermons and prayers in worship.
- \* Designate at least one Sunday each year as "Peace Sunday."
- \* Teach peacemaking as a way of life for all ages through the use of games, the arts, music, videos, and storytelling.
- \* Create a peace mission statement and identify concrete ways to achieve it.
- \* Incorporate sustainable ways of living and using resources.
- \* Raise awareness on issues of economic justice, restorative justice, race and ethnicity, and global and cultural concerns.
- \* Support victims of domestic and civil violence.
- \* Identify organizations and legislative bodies adopting peace education and nonviolence policies that you can support.
- \* With synods, provide one or both trainings in nonviolence for members:
  - \* **Living Faithfully in a Violent World**—Call the ELCA Division for Congregational Ministries. 773/380-2404
  - \* **From Violence to Wholeness**—Call Lutheran Peace Fellowship. 206/720-0313

**fast\*pray\*sing\*witness\*advocate\*learn\*model**