

WE BELIEVE in a church that not only states that *“War is incompatible with the teachings of Jesus,”* but also rejects war as an instrument of national policy and finds the massive outlays of money for national defense as obscene. These practices rob the most vulnerable of resources necessary for life and the pursuit of happiness. We remain suspicious of sophisticated political rhetoric used to manipulate thought and justify the use of violence. We view preemptive strikes as abhorrent. They are a direct affront to the ways of Jesus. We seek instead to embrace proven means that would lead to a just peace, including feeding the hungry, quality education, access to healthcare and employment, housing the sojourner, and becoming conversant with and respectful of national, religious, cultural, and ethnic differences. We confess that religious triumphalism, including our own, whereby one religion or sect asserts superior access to and exclusive relationship with God, is a root cause of much of the world's current mayhem. Therefore, following the example of Jesus we pray for a new spirit of humility for the people called United Methodists and other religious bodies, both Christian and not, so that all nations might experience an incarnation of Jesus-like goodness that could lead to a just peace in our time.

WE BELIEVE in a church that proclaims the *stewardship of creation* joyfully and without reservation as an expression of social and environmental holiness. We confess our failure to recognize our essential connectedness with our environment, our exhaustion of resources, and our pollution of land, water, and air that threaten the continuation of our civilization. We urge the development of energy policies, corporate actions and business practices that aim at the wellbeing of the whole world rather than simply the increase of profits, goods and services.