



Witnessing, Listening for Justice and Peace

"But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear. For truly I say to you that many prophets and righteous wo/men have desired to see those things which you see, and have not seen them, and to hear those things which you hear, and have not heard them." Matthew 13:16-17

Dear Delegates and Friends,

Throughout 2018, On Earth Peace invites you and your districts to **join us as we celebrate the many ways in which we are all "Witnessing, Listening for Justice and Peace."** This year, following on the success of last year's "Being Built Together" theme, we will be seeking and highlighting stories from individuals, congregations, and organizations that reflect the engagement of our constituents in today's issues of justice and peace. We invite you to **share with us your stories of how the theme scripture resonates in the life of your district or congregation so that it might encourage others** who are confronting the threats of injustice and war.

Last year, even as challenging conflicts presented themselves across our denomination and the wider society, **OEP continued our journey of working as an organization committed to anti-racist transformation** to align ourselves, both within and outside of the Church of the Brethren, with those who bear the brunt of today's versions of war, which we understand to go beyond competing factions on a battlefield.

At Annual Conference we brought insight sessions on topics such as forbearance, childhood in the US, working to become a multicultural church, stories from racial justice struggles, and more. We worked throughout districts like yours to bring programs to youth and young adults and helped provide leadership for the Harrisburg, PA National Workcamp. We sponsored the "Big Rapids Song & Story Fest: Rafting in the Hollow of God's Hand!". The event's purposes included: to reconnect with the God of all creation and with each other; to tell the stories that make for peace and rekindle faith; to sing the words of our hearts in gratitude for the unceasing power of life; to root and ground ourselves in the Jesus Way; to deepen our connections with each other and the earth; and to learn the skills of peacemaking and justice-seeking. Across the church, and beyond we joined with many in the present-day struggles for justice and peace to provide faithful witness and accompaniment.

On behalf of our staff and board, thank you for your consistent and continued support of On Earth Peace. We are an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and an agency of the Church of the Brethren. We receive no regular funding from the Church of the Brethren Inc. budget, and rely solely on the commitment and generosity of our individual, congregational, and foundation supporters. Your gifts allow us to continue expanding our community and to share these vital ministries around the country and the world. We ask that you prayerfully consider how you can strengthen your investment in our work.

We are grateful for the congregations in your district that participated in programs and made donations to On Earth Peace in 2017. If your congregation would like to learn more about On Earth Peace as you consider supporting our work through your budget, please contact us so a representative can visit with you and share more.

Yours in His Peace,

Handwritten signature of Bill Scheurer in blue ink.

Bill Scheurer, Executive Director

Handwritten signature of Lamar Gibson in blue ink.

Lamar Gibson, Director of Development