

GA-1930
ON WOMEN AND JUST PEACEMAKING
(Sense-of-the-Assembly)

WHEREAS, all people are beloved children, created in God’s image (Gen. 1:27), and in Christ, all divisions are removed, including those of gender (Gal. 3:28); and

WHEREAS, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) has repeatedly proclaimed the equality of all people – emphasizing women’s rights to freedom from violence, full participation in church and society including decision-making, economic justice, access to health care, and reproductive freedom; and noting the connection of these issues to just peacemaking – and called for action to promote this equality, within the church and in our society and world¹; and

WHEREAS, an estimated 1 in 3 women (35 percent) worldwide have experienced either physical and/or sexual violence at some point in their lives²; and

WHEREAS, situations involving conflict and displacement may exacerbate existing violence against women, such as by intimate partners, as well as non-partner sexual violence (for example, when rape is used as a tool of war), and may also lead to new forms of violence against women³; and

WHEREAS, data suggests that transgender and gender-fluid individuals experience similar patterns of violence to cisgender⁴ women; some estimates indicate that one in two transgender individuals are sexually abused or assaulted at some point in their lives, and some reports estimate that 66% of transgender individuals experience sexual assault, often coupled with physical assaults and abuse⁵; reports also suggest that murder rates for transgender women have been increasing in the United States and internationally, particularly impacting transgender women of color (85% of reported transgender murders are of transgender women of color) and migrants⁶; and

¹ On reproductive freedom & access to health care, Resolutions 8954, 9314 & 0730. On economic justice & full participation, Resolutions 7342, 8525, 8956, 8931 & 9140. On freedom from violence, Resolutions 8936 & 0313.

² <http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/facts-and-figures>

³ <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/violence-against-women>

⁴ Cisgender is a term used by some to describe people who are not transgender. “Cis” is a Latin prefix meaning “on the same side as,” and is therefore an antonym of “trans-.”

⁵ https://www.ovc.gov/pubs/forge/sexual_numbers.html

⁶ <https://www.hrc.org/resources/a-national-epidemic-fatal-anti-transgender-violence-in-america-in-2018>
<https://transrespect.org/en/tmm-update-trans-day-of-remembrance-2018/>

WHEREAS, higher levels of gender equality are associated with a lower propensity for conflict, both between and within states⁷; and

WHEREAS, in 2018 the Norwegian Nobel Committee awarded the Nobel Peace Prize to Denis Mukwege and Nadia Murad for their efforts to end the use of sexual violence as a weapon of war and armed conflict; and

WHEREAS, women's participation in peace negotiations increases the durability and the quality of peace, as evidenced by the recent study investigating 82 peace agreements in 42 armed conflicts between 1989 and 2011, which found that peace agreements with female signatories are associated with durable peace.⁸ Specifically, when women participate in peace processes, the resulting agreement is 35% more likely to last at least 15 years⁹; and

WHEREAS, gender-sensitive language in peace agreements is critical to setting a foundation for gender-inclusion during the peacebuilding phase¹⁰; and

WHEREAS, the World Council of Churches has promoted women's rights since its 1948 inception in close collaboration with religious and civil-society partners around the world, and in 1953 the program of Women in Church and Society began with the proclamation that the renewal of dignified life after World War II was only possible if women were an active part of every initiative of justice and peace by the churches in society¹¹;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) meeting in Des Moines, Iowa, July 20-24, 2019, reaffirm our historic, scripturally-based support for the equality of women, in church and in society, and

⁷ <https://www.cfr.org/interactive/womens-participation-in-peace-processes>

⁸ <http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/peace-and-security/facts-and-figures>

⁹ <https://www.cfr.org/interactive/womens-participation-in-peace-processes>

¹⁰ <http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/peace-and-security/facts-and-figures>

¹¹ <https://www.oikoumene.org/en/what-we-do/women-and-men/history/women-in-wcc-history>

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the General Assembly recognizes that all barriers to full equality contribute to a global culture that tolerates violence against women and gender minorities and diminishes their participation in shaping a more just world, and call on all leaders, within the church and within society, to help eliminate those barriers, including violence, pay gaps and other economic inequities, and lack of access to health care and education; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the General Assembly encourages all congregations, individuals, and other ministries within the Church to examine our beliefs, assumptions, and practices for any ways in which they may create barriers to the full participation of women in membership and leadership within the church, including especially compensation and hiring policies, and the use of gendered language for God and God's people, and work to eliminate those barriers; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the General Assembly calls upon all manifestations of the church to educate ourselves about the roles of women in just peacemaking and lift up advocates such as Denis Mukwege and Nadia Murad, and to listen to women's stories, wisdom, and policy proposals, as a way of opening ourselves to the movement of the Spirit; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the General Assembly commends to the church the work of Disciples Women's Ministries, the Women's Empowerment Fund of Week of Compassion and other similar initiatives, as instruments for engaging in women-focused just peacemaking; and

FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED, that the General Assembly joins in celebration of the accomplishments and work of women acting as peacemakers around the world.

Disciples Peace Fellowship

**The General Board recommends that the General Assembly ADOPT GA-1930.
(Discussion Time: 12 minutes)**