

MINUTE FOR MISSION

A SPECIAL INVITATION

Most of us don't get any mail except for what? Bills and junk. But once in a while, now and then, a pretty envelope, perhaps hand-addressed and with something nice inside, is nestled among the coupons and ads and utility bills.

An invitation.

It's something different and it feels good. It feels good to be invited.

Sometimes the church talks about the work we do as an obligation or a duty. We start thinking about the sign-up sheets and the time requirement, the money and ... But I try to remember 'invitation' instead. Every time we are asked to give of ourselves, our time, our talent and our treasure, it helps to think of it as an invitation to imagine and be a part of God's reign on earth. And on World Communion Sunday, I can think of no more appropriate word than 'invitation.'

Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, invites us to the table. And not just us, but Christ invites, and we open doors to believers from all over the world, and we even profess that believers from every time and place join us. At this table we proclaim that Christ joins us into one body despite our differences. Christ invites and our doors open to the broken, the hurting and the survivors of violence—those who suffer, as he suffered, to be nourished by his compassion. Christ invites, and our doors open to all those who work for reconciliation and advocate for God's justice, which makes for peace.

Christ invites, and we also offer ourselves to the pursuit to end violence and bring about reconciliation through the Peace and Global Witness Offering. Through our gifts, we offer a healing hand to women experiencing abuse, here in this country and in places like Guatemala, even as we seek to remedy the structures that create their vulnerability.

Our giving offers a word of peace to those incarcerated here and those crushed by civil war in places like the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Our offering draws together those who were once at war, creating opportunities for veterans from this land to return to Iraq and build relationships that offer a start to healing

and understanding. And this offering will [SHARE YOUR OWN STORY] with the 25% that we retain in this congregation.

It is one of the ways we RSVP 'yes' to Christ's invitation and offer, as the words in 2 Thessalonians say, 'peace, at all times, in all ways.' At Christ's table, and in these gifts, we are invited to believe those words. But for peace to truly be offered 'at all times, in all ways' we will start at THIS time and in THESE ways. If we all do a little, it adds up to a lot.

Let Us Pray ~

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to believers from all over the world,
and from every time and place.
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to those all those who work actively
for reconciliation and
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Christ invites, which makes for peace.
Amen.*