



Dave Bergen
Executive Secretary,
Christian Formation

November/December 2009, *Equipping* #101

One small act for Peace...

In a small prairie town, in 2008, a small group of Mennonite Christians with a passion for peace-building came up with a modest proposal. They saw evidence of an increasingly militarized society in Canada. They wanted to offer an alternative to the prevailing assumption that fighting and war will resolve conflict. They believed fervently that Jesus calls his followers to nurture an imagination for a non-violent way to peace, and to do so in a tangible, public manner. And, they felt called to encourage their church—Mennonite Church Canada—to work together to do something constructive for peace.

In July of 2008 they tested their dream at the MC Canada Assembly. Delegates discerned that the Holy Spirit was at work in their modest dream, and voted overwhelmingly to affirm an initiative that would invite every congregation to mount a “Peace in the Public Square” campaign in their community. This campaign would be characterized by an atmosphere of bridge-building, respect, invitation, welcome and openness to conversation. At Assembly 2009 a specific plan of action was presented to the delegates and overwhelmingly affirmed. And so www.liveforpeace.org was born.

November 15, 2009 marks the official launch of www.liveforpeace.org. This living website will be home to a wealth of ideas and resources to help your congregation imagine how you might share your convictions about Jesus’ call to live for peace in your community. The site will offer resources to help you welcome those who visit your places of worship, ask about your peace convictions, or are searching for a more satisfying response to the way our culture responds to violence. You’ll find help to prepare your congregation to be a welcoming, safe place for inquirers, learn how to respond to media attention, answer tough questions about peace,

and more. You can get acquainted with the background for the project by reviewing the Assembly 2009 discussion and presentation materials found at www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/1180 and www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/1181.

Mennonite Church Alberta is already poised to launch a Peace in the Public Square public advertising campaign in the city of Calgary beginning November 23. You’re encouraged to watch the liveforpeace.org website and stay in touch with the exciting things they are planning, and to be inspired.

What will you be doing to build and share peace in your community?

Resources to nurture congregational life

- *Prayer Journeys with Children*, for parents, grandparents and other caregivers is a helpful guide to lead children in patterns of prayer that can nurture them throughout their lives. Available as a limited edition colour booklet for purchase and as a download at www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/1133.
- *The Way of the Child*, is a hands on tool to help children explore their own spirituality at a pace and level appropriate to them, and introduce them to classic spiritual practices. Borrow this book at www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/1175.
- *A Journey Called Aging and Growing Old in Christ* are only two of a growing list of resources on ministry with seniors. These and many other excellent materials are available through the Resource Centre at www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/1176.