

Dear followers of Christ,

**What does God need from the Church of the Brethren now (and are we prepared to give it)? What does it mean for us to be a “peace church” in today’s world?**

Founded in 1974, On Earth Peace is an agency of the Church of the Brethren Annual Conference which seeks to embolden the Church of the Brethren as a historic and living peace church. Our name comes from the angel’s song at Jesus’ birth, “On Earth Peace and Good Will to All,” and we work to lift that song in today’s world.



Historically, our Brethren identity as a peace church was defined in part by our relationship to war: *Following Christ, we were against war.* Even as time passed and many Brethren didn’t agree with pacifism, the Church’s identity as a force for peace and against war remained vital. What is the core of our peace commitment today? What are we against, and what are we for--in God’s name?

**In a church and world that is very polarized, what does it mean to you to be a follower of the Prince of Peace?** In some ways, the war we were against has come home, and the sorely-needed peace (and justice) is more complicated than our ancestors in the faith may have known. Some parts are still the same--the all-surpassing love of Christ as a foundation of that peace--and yet the world in which we proclaim God’s love has changed, and so must our engagement with it.

**On Earth Peace believes the Church of the Brethren has been called for such a time as this.** We as Brethren are a relational, warm, discipleship-centered community. We help put hands and feet to God’s call to love all people. On Earth Peace seeks to help the Church of the Brethren become what it can be, “for the glory of God and our neighbor’s good.”

**Here are three OEP initiatives we believe can help the Church of the Brethren become what’s needed in today’s world.**

- **1000 Brethren Kingian Nonviolence Training.** We are seeking to train a new generation of Christian leaders in nonviolence, to focus our “peace” and aid in our community ministries.
- **Standing with People of Color Study/Action Process.** Together with the Southern Ohio/Kentucky District, OEP is leading a two-year denomination-wide study/action process focused around key conversations we’re asking the church to have.
- **Church of the Brethren Gun Violence Prevention Organizing Team.** A hearty band of Brethren from across the country has come together to galvanize all Brethren to stand and act together on the scourge of gun violence in the US.

Please consider whether your family can support this ministry financially. We hope your congregation will include our ministry as part of your outreach giving in your 2024 budget.

Write to us at [OEP@OnEarthPeace.org](mailto:OEP@OnEarthPeace.org) and share how God is moving you towards peace or justice in these times. Visit [www.OnEarthPeace.org](http://www.OnEarthPeace.org) to learn about our work and find upcoming events.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Matt Guynn".

Matt Guynn  
For OEP’s executive team, with Darlene Johnson and Marie Benner-Rhoades