



**Building Beloved Communities of Justice & Peace**

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**Being Built Together in Financial Generosity**

On Earth Peace relies on the commitment and generosity of individuals, congregations, and foundations to carry out our work. Here is a look at On Earth Peace financial results for 2016. *Income:* Individuals (593 donors) \$215,497; Congregations (187 churches); \$75,402; Programs \$21,333; Foundations \$3,000; Endowment distributions \$27,512; Other \$2,774; Total \$345,518; *Expenses:* \$473,430. *Net Operating Loss:* (127,912). *Unrealized Gains:* \$54,017. *Net Loss:* (73,895).

With the growing divisions in our society, we need more than ever to work for justice and peace at home and abroad. This commitment may challenge our historic base of supporters, as it might in any organization that undergoes the intentional, strategic shift that On Earth Peace has in recent years. In order to continue our important ministries, we ask that you prayerfully consider strengthening your contributions to On Earth Peace and our programs. If you have never given before and find that our work speaks to you, please make a gift today. We thank you for your support! For information about making contributions to On Earth Peace, contact our Development Director Lamar Gibson at [LGibson@OnEarthPeace.org](mailto:LGibson@OnEarthPeace.org) or 336-686-1292.

# Being Built Together



*“Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the entire building, tightly framed together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling place of God through the Spirit.”*  
- Ephesians 2:19-22

We identify ourselves in the Church of the Brethren by the claim, “Continuing the work of Jesus—peacefully, simply, together.” When we make this claim, what does “together” mean?

Does it mean only being with people who are like “us”—like the white bricks on the front of this poster? What if you are more like one of the red or green or yellow or blue bricks? Are you still “us”—are we still “together” as “fellow citizens ... the household of God,” or are we more like “strangers and foreigners?”

This “household of God” is like the “Kin-dom of Heaven”—at once both, immediately at hand, and in the making. It is what we can become today. What we must be tomorrow.

Look around you in your church. Do all or most of the people look like you, talk like you, live like you, or originally belong to the same identity groups as you? If so, your church is not yet living into the full vision of being the church. It is not yet living into the call of “being built together into a dwelling place of God through the Spirit.”

If you do see diversity in your church, are you “tightly framed together” as a community, like a family? Or, more like a mix of different parts that never blend into one? And, how do you welcome newcomers who are yet again different than anyone else who is already there? How do they become family?

The failure to fully embrace one another in all our diversity has been the single biggest problem in the world and church—and has led to all the other problems—in all ages. It is time to start making the connection (by making connections) between faithful discipleship and love for our neighbors in their genuine diversity.

*“We declare our hope is in making the connection between God as revealed in Jesus Christ and the problems that trouble our age.”*  
- Making the Connection (1986 Church of the Brethren Statement)

On Earth Peace invites churches and disciples everywhere to join together in this bold hope—by making these connections, in word and deed—in 2017, and beyond. #RiskHope!

\* “Kin-dom of Heaven” builds on the practice of using words thoughtfully as modeled by Jews in ancient times. They often chose to use “heaven” to refer to God, whose name was considered too holy to pronounce. Some today have begun to use “Kin-dom” to help us think more clearly about the teaching of Jesus: “Kin-dom makes it clear that when the fullness of God becomes a reality, we will all be sisters and brothers—kin to each other.” - Ada Maria Isasi-Diaz, from Lift Every Voice: Constructing Christian Theologies from the Underside.

**Being Built Together in Pursuing Peace**



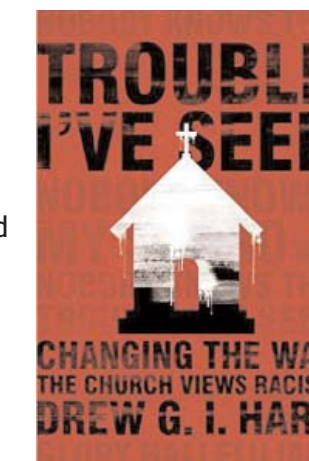
In 2016, over eighty different congregations and communities connected to On Earth Peace celebrated Peace Day in impactful and innovative ways. Most were Church of the Brethren congregations and ecumenical friends here in the United States. We also connected with groups in Cameroon, Nigeria, India, Mexico, Brazil, Northern Ireland, and Canada. Peace Day is a time to pray and renew our own commitments to working for peace in Christ’s name, in these times of violent conflict and hateful speech. It is a chance to lift a vision of God’s dream of peace with justice and to recommit our congregations or groups to be built together into a powerful witness for Christ’s peace. The theme offered by On Earth Peace in 2016 was “Called to Build Peace,” and the campaign was coordinated by On Earth Peace intern Bryan Hanger.



**Being Built Together in Racial Justice**

2016 was a strong year for our racial justice work, with leadership by organizing interns Chibuzo Petty and Radiah Shabazz, and staff support from Matt Guynn. We identified three core focus areas: Commitment (to tangible work for racial justice); Community (deepening and broadening); and Capacity (raising all of our skill levels).

We strengthened our monthly organizer clinics and individual relational support, and developed a group book club, starting with Drew Hart’s “Trouble I’ve Seen: Changing the Way the Church Views Racism” (more than fifteen congregations also either read or plan to read the book using On Earth Peace’s discussion guide). We also grew into three different practice groups: OEP-Racial Justice, our basic group; OEP-RJ Accountability, for participants in our organizer clinics; and OEP-RJ Miami Valley, a regional group for racial justice workers in the southwest Ohio area. On Earth Peace’s racial justice organizing work is part of our Nonviolent Social Change Organizing.



**Built Together In Anti-Racism Transformation**

How well-meaning white Christians enforce and reinforce white space...

*Martinez? That’s not a Brethren name. It’s the way we have always done it.*

*What do you think of the new moderator?*

- Imagine you are an onlooker in each of these.
- Think of your own examples of subtle racism.
- Plan for how to undo racism in each situation.
- Practice with a friend so you can be ready.

Imagine each LEGO is a friend, family member, associate. Is your wall all one color? How could change this picture?

From the On Earth Peace Anti-Racism Transformation Team.



**Being Built Together in Young Adult Leadership**

In 2016, On Earth Peace hosted sixteen interns in key roles across the organization. Some are Church of the Brethren members, while nearly half are new to the denomination; all come eager to do the work of peace-making as part of an agency of the church. While each of our interns are charged with specific individual projects—including racial justice organizer, social media organizer, Stop Recruiting Kids Campaign organizer, youth retreat coordinator, congregational organizer, communications editor, impact planning coordinator, and more—they all build together the work of On Earth Peace, and are built together through the Spirit! On Earth Peace paid internships are available to young adults age 18-24, current college and graduate students of any age, and recent graduates who begin within one year after graduation.



**Being Built Together in Peace Formation**

Building skills for active peacemaking in each generation is part of On Earth Peace’s 40-year legacy. In 2016, youth in Bethlehem, Palestine had the opportunity to participate in Agape-Satyagraha youth leadership training in conflict transformation and nonviolence as part of our newest partnership with Wi’am: The Palestinian Conflict Transformation Center. Youth met in the shadow of the apartheid wall and were threatened by soldiers while they were studying A-S. As a witness and act of resistance, the youth drew the A-S logo on the wall. We also continue to engage youth through peace retreats, church camps, conferences, and our co-sponsorship of the Youth Peace Travel Team. OEP also is a contributor to the new Dunker Punks podcast. These many opportunities enable OEP to meet youth across the denomination and encourage and equip them for lifelong peace witness.



**Being Built Together in Embracing Conflict**

The OEP Ministry of Reconciliation inspires and equips people to engage in conflict faithfully and healthily, instead of avoiding it by living in denial and imbalance of power. In 2016, the MoR continued providing consultations, workshops, and trainings for local church leaders, district Shalom Teams, and church conferences and special events. The MoR led a new workshop on “Congregational Covenants” at the biannual Church Planting Conference, and made a major overhaul of our flagship “Matthew 18” workshop and began field testing it in different regions. The MoR also updated our original training resource for what later evolved into district Shalom Team equipping, and began laying groundwork to renew and rebuild our practitioner network around the new Community of Practice framework that On Earth Peace is using in all its work.



**Being Built Together in Protecting Children**



In 2016, On Earth Peace continued as national sponsor for the Stop Recruiting Kids Campaign, a nationwide movement to protect children and schools from military marketing and recruitment and to build public support for non-military opportunities for young people after high school. The SRK Campaign has grown to over ten thousand supporters who help share our message and goals throughout their social media and beyond.

**Being Built Together in Kingian Nonviolence**

In 2016, On Earth Peace continued playing a key role in Kingian Nonviolence leadership development, helping build people together for collective action and nonviolent conflict reconciliation. KNV is a philosophy and practice for an inspiring and powerful vision of agape love in action. On Earth Peace helped form the Kingian Nonviolence Coordinating Committee, which provided stand-alone webinar events on topics including organizing and mobilizing, nonviolence training with police departments, and a six-hour introduction to KNV. We also offered our third six-month cohort for “Beyond the Dream: The Radical Love of Martin Luther King, Jr.,” where participants read Dr. King’s five books, along with readings from and about women leaders in the Civil Rights Movement. David Jehnsen, co-author of the KNV practice, has helped with all these programs.

