



## What is a peace church?<sup>i</sup>

- **a Jesus-centered community:** people are gathered together around Jesus and confess him as Savior and Lord seeking to follow him in daily life
  - a “thick” Jesus<sup>ii</sup> who heals, forgives, eats with outcasts, loves enemies, seeks right relationship, becomes flesh and “moves into the neighborhood”
  - the Jesus who preaches and demonstrates God’s kingdom of justice, peace and joy and invites others to seek/enter/inherit/ receive/see that future that is breaking in now and that God intends for everyone
    - a community of people who are on a journey -- both inner and outer -- of growing into the likeness of Christ
- **a caring and sharing community** that shares time and resources with each other and cares for each other and neighbors
- **a reconciling community** which deals redemptively with conflict and through authentic relationships crosses barriers of race, class and culture
- **a community of nonviolent witness and service** (an alternative to military service and engagement)
- **a community which celebrates the gifts of each person** and the role each person plays in building up the body
- **a discerning community:** the gathered community discerns God’s will together, giving and receiving counsel
- **a community that is prepared to suffer** for the gospel of peace

A community gathered around Jesus that in all it says, does and is, seeks to be **a sign of God’s coming kingdom** of justice, peace and joy.

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<sup>i</sup> Adapted by André Gingerich Stoner from a 1981 essay by Marlin E. Miller, “Die Gestalt der Friedenskirche – die Friedensgestalt der Kirche” (The character/form of peace church – the peacemaking character/form of church)

<sup>ii</sup> a term used by Glen Stassen, professor of ethics at Fuller Theological Seminary