

# **A DECLARATION OF RESISTANCE TO THE WAR IN IRAQ**

We embrace the teachings of Jesus Christ and his radical message of unconditional love and resistance to all forms of violence and injustice. This requires that we actively seek peace by working for justice and compels us to take a moral stand against this war. We seek to dialogue with those members of our community and outside who hold differing viewpoints, and pledge to maintain the commitment to unconditional love and nonviolent resistance to those who disagree.

The deaths, dismemberment, and physical and psychological injuries to victims of war, both civilians and soldiers; the destruction of cities and homes; and the incalculable harm to the environment in this war are unconscionable to us as Christians and as human beings. Equally harmful is the amount of resources diverted from positive endeavors such as education, infrastructure, and human services. This diversion of resources is most harmful to the poor.

We reject the practices of military recruiters, especially in schools. We condemn the 'poverty draft' which brings young men and women into the military by denying them other options and enticing them with false promises. We support conscientious objectors and those soldiers who choose to follow their conscience and refuse to participate in this war. We reject torture and abuse, detention of civilians, and the use of chemical weapons and cluster bombs, and all other weapons that are used in our name.

In seeking peace and justice, we must examine our own lifestyles and become aware of the system of oppression and greed of which this war is a manifestation. We must become willing to share what we have for the common good on national and global levels. We believe we are all brothers and sisters and will embrace each other with love and not look at each other with fear.

We recognize that we all benefit, directly or indirectly, from the economic activities resulting from this war through defense related jobs in an economy partially based on war. We also recognize our complicity through our silence and acceptance of events. As individuals and groups we call each other to be active in trying to change the direction of our country by expressing our views to our neighbors and our elected leaders. We support civil disobedience as a tool for calling our nation to repentance and justice.

The path of nonviolence and unconditional love Jesus calls us to is a path of great difficulty. We acknowledge our own weakness, and commit to prayer and to trust in the power of God's love in our attempt to walk this path. We ask our fellow citizens to join in our effort to find common ground and to stand for peace not war.