



Renewing Our Call to Biblical Peacemaking

This has become a transitional year on many levels. Rev. Mark Sholander, who had led this ministry since 2012, resigned and relocated to Williamsburg in December. Ron Zabel, our Founding Director stepped in as interim CEO, and engaged one of our Certified Christian Conciliators, Adrienne Elwell, as a part time administrator. Our board met in February to consider our path forward and again in May to make decisions on the ministry's structure and focus. The primary outcome is a renewal of our call to Biblically grounded, Christ centered peacemaking.

We are refocusing our services and all of our materials on our Biblical distinctives and particularly on helping parties find reconciliation through counseling / coaching and conciliation. Our hope is to encourage and guide people toward making every effort to pursue peace. We have refreshed portions of our website to emphasize that focus and have committed to providing more preliminary coaching process to prepare parties to productively address conflict, particularly in the relationship aspects of the dispute. While important in any case, we believe this is particularly crucial in family cases and have decided not to take cases where parties come in intending a separation to divorce unless they are willing to first make good faith personal conciliation efforts.

Our approach is summarized in an equation: R before I, except after T. This equation has been widely shared within Peacemaker ministries for many years. It came from a long time Board Member and chaplain to their staff, Pastor Don Bubna. It stands for “Relationships before Issues except after Trust has been established.” People in conflict are typically focused on the issues facing them and getting what they want without addressing or even considering the relational aspects of conflict, not only with the other party, but also with Christ.

We are focused on encouraging and coaching those we serve to first pursue peace with God and each other and then tackle the substantive issues with relational barriers removed to achieve peace with the overall outcome.

Our ministry framework for the time being will continue to be part time staffing for CEO, Outreach and Development, and Office Administration.

We are happy to have Lucy Nichols join us as Outreach and Development Officer. The Lord has put it on her heart to seek the growth of this ministry and opportunities to serve lower income families struggling with conflict. Our announcement of her joining us is attached.

We are opening a search for a CEO who can provide strategic direction and leadership. We are seeking an individual with a heart for peacemaking and part-time availability. Our CEO position announcement is attached. Please circulate it within your faith community.

One of our distinctives is the use of a conciliation team in most cases, including a male and female conciliator. We need to expand our conciliator pool. We currently have several well qualified female conciliators working with us but only a couple of well qualified male conciliators. If you are aware of biblically grounded individuals with good communication skills and a temperament for peacemaking, we would be very interested in speaking with them about the potential for occasionally being part of a conciliation team.

Final Note In this transition we face many financial challenges. If you agree with our vision to fulfill Christ's call to be peacemakers, please consider making your most generous gift today, which you may do through the link on: <http://www.conflictopeace.org/support.html>
Thanks!

Grace and peace to you.