

PEACE POINTS

Lutheran Peace Fellowship

Peace in our world • Peace in our nation • Peace in our neighborhoods • Peace in our homes • Peace in our hearts

Reclaim the Season!

Peace & Justice Living and Giving *at Christmas and Throughout the Year*

It's often not "simple" to live and work for simplicity and sustainability in our lives. This is especially true during the holiday season when consumerism is working overtime. Making suggestions for change, while respecting holiday traditions, is one of the balancing acts we face when as Christians we strive to celebrate outside distorted, materialistic views of Christmas. Here are ideas and resources on how we might do this through the gifts we give, the time we share, and our preparation for the birth of the Prince of Peace.

Purchase gifts from a Fair Trade catalog or website:

- ◆ **ELCA Good Gifts:**
www.elca.org/Resources
- ◆ **Lutheran World Relief** fair trade site:
www.lwrfarmersmarket.org
- ◆ **Fellowship of Reconciliation**, Gifts for Peace: www.forusa.org/store.php
- ◆ **Ten Thousand Villages**,
<http://www.tenthousandvillages.com/>
- ◆ **SERRV International:**
<http://www.serrv.org/>
- ◆ **Fair Trade Federation**, association of wholesalers, producers and retailers:
www.fairtradefederation.org/

Give a gift membership

to Lutheran Peace Fellowship or give a donation in honor of someone you love. (LPF will send you a gift card.)

Begin a family-time activity

or devotion series, sharing its tasks. Plan to continue into the new year.



Be creative with your gifts:

- ◆ Design and create a calendar using cut-out pictures, photos, drawings, and/or quotations.
- ◆ Make an ELCA Hunger or Lutheran World Relief contribution in honor of a recipient.
- ◆ Compile songs into a flash drive. Under each title, explain why you chose it for the recipient.
- ◆ Compile a list of memories and arrange them in a creative fashion; add illustrations if you want.
- ◆ Buy a used book and in the inside cover explain why you chose the book for that person.
- ◆ Make an audio or video interview with an elderly relative about childhood memories, how they met their spouse, etc.; give to siblings, children.
- ◆ Bake your favorite holiday treat or homemade goodie and pack in a recycled tin.
- ◆ Collect quotes or recipes for the recipient.

Offer the gift of your time:

- ◆ Treat an older relative or friend to a monthly lunch date.
- ◆ Write and deliver a poem or story; or create a visual for a Bible verse that the recipient likes.
- ◆ Volunteer together at a meal program, food bank, soup kitchen, or shelter.
- ◆ Share a culinary, computer or other skill.
- ◆ Set household spending limits and choose a peace and justice group to support as a gift.

"Peace Points" is a series of leaders' guides and resources from Lutheran Peace Fellowship offering insight and practical tips to encourage individuals and families, youth and adult groups in their efforts toward peace with justice.

Lutheran Peace Fellowship (LPF) is a **community of Lutherans** in the U.S. and around the globe, responding to **the gospel call** for us to strive for **peace & justice**. LPF offers valued expertise and resources. . . insight and encouragement.
lpf@ecunet.org
206-349-2501
1710 11th Avenue,
Seattle, WA 98122
www.lutheranpeace.org
lutheranpeace on Facebook

For discussion and reflection

We are called to celebrate all life, including our own, not to repress it. But to celebrate life does not involve participation in the luxury and waste of a throwaway society that exists in the midst of world poverty. **John Cobb**

Simplicity can be difficult, but the alternative is immensely more difficult. **Richard Foster**

If you realize you have enough,
you are truly rich. **Lao Tzu**

The human community and the natural world will go into the future together as a single, sacred community or we will both perish in the desert. **Thomas Berry**

We read the Gospel as if we had no money, and we spend our money as if we know nothing of the Gospel. **John Haughey**

From Scripture...

Do Not Worry, Matthew 6:25-34

The Rich Young Man, Matthew 19:16-26

The Parable of the Rich Fool, Luke 12:13-21

Deut. 24:14-15, Matthew, 6:20, John 6:12

Acts 4: 32-35, 1 Timothy 6:6-10...

The more we have, the less we own. **Meister Eckhart**

Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the Lord, and he will repay him for his deed. **Proverbs 19:17 ESV**

I shall pass through this world but once. Any good therefore that I can do or any kindness that I can show to any human being, let me do it now. Let me not defer or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again. --

Mohandas Gandhi

This we know: the Earth does not belong to the people; the people belong to the Earth. All things are connected. We are brothers and sisters after all. **Native American Wisdom**

Justice is sorting out what belongs
to whom and returning it to them.

Walter Brueggemann

i thank You God for most this amazing day: for the leaping greenly spirits of trees and a blue true dream of sky; and for everything which is natural which is infinite which is Yes **e.e. Cummings**

Teach us to delight in simple things. **[SEP] Kipling**

Resources

Groups, Websites:

Simple Living Works!

SimpleLivingWorks@yahoo.com

www.simpleliving.startlogic.com

<https://www.facebook.com/SimpleLivingWorks/>

New Dream, www.newdream.org/ Beyond Consumerism program with SoKind Registry, Simplify the Holidays and more.

Books and Manuals:

Beyond Guilt: Christian Response to Suffering, George S. Johnson

Simpler Living, Compassionate Life, Michael Schut, editor (Living the Good News)

Simplify and Celebrate, Michael Crosby, Joan Chittister, many other writers (Northstone)

Living More With Less, Doris Janzen Longacre On faith-based voluntary simplicity (Herald)

Unfettered Hope: A Call to Faithful Living in an Affluent Society, Marva Dawn (WJK)

Unplug the Christmas Machine, Jo Robinson and Jean Staeheli (Quill) Many practical ideas (free **leaders guide** from Simple Living Works!)

Worship Resources:

A Call to Peace, Jim McGinnis. 52 meditations with helpful resource lists: www.ipj-ppj.org

Guide My Feet, ed. by Marian Wright Edelman, prayers and reflections (Beacon)

Leader Resources: LPF Peace Points: Hosting a Hunger Awareness Meal

Tips for group use

Opening prayer, song, and/or text, e.g. The Magnificat, Luke 1, or WOV (5 min.)
What is Christmas in our family? (10 min.)

Divide up the quotes and Bible texts and discuss in small groups. (15 min.)

Return and share ideas. Then brainstorm alternatives, leaders occasionally adding an idea from page one. (20 min.)

Close with an Advent song, prayer. (5 min.)
Have LPF Intro and Issue resources available for sharing.

LPF's **Peace Points** resources include:

♦ *What Is Christian Peacemaking?* ♦ *Conflict Education* ♦ *Peace Worship* ♦ *Just War* ♦ *Hunger Awareness*. . . Available free by mail and at: **www.LutheranPeace.org**

Initial version by Grace Hanson and Glen Gersmehl; with gratitude for support from Wheat Ridge Ministries.