



**Mennonite  
World Conference**

A Community of Anabaptist  
related Churches

**Congreso  
Mundial Menonita**

Una Comunidad de  
Iglesias Anabautistas

**Conférence  
Mennonite Mondiale**

Une Communauté  
d'Eglises Anabaptistes

www.mwc-cmm.org  
info@mwc-cmm.org

General Secretariat:  
Calle 28A No.16-41 Piso 2  
Bogotá, Colombia  
T: (57) 1 287 5738  
F: (57) 1 287 5738

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Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

We are writing to invite you and your congregation to observe Peace Sunday together with brothers and sisters in the global Anabaptist church family on 24 September 2017. Accompanying this letter, we send worship and resource material suggestions your churches may want to use in celebrating Peace Sunday on 24 September.

The theme for this year's Peace Sunday is: "A Renewed Peace Church Builds Bridges." This theme picks up on two elements. The first builds on the "[Renewal 2027](#)" process MWC has embarked on. What, therefore, does it mean to be a "renewed Peace Church"? Second, in light of the rising nationalisms around the world, which separates and polarizes one from the other, we thought it would be good to explore how, in seeking to live according to our calling of being a people of peace, we counter such tendencies and look for ways to build bridges with others.

#### Rationale for Peace Sunday

Following the recommendation of the 2003 Peace Council in Bulawayo regarding the establishment of Peace Sunday, the 2006 Peace Commission in Pasadena has chosen the Sunday nearest to 21 September (International Day of Peace) as a Peace Sunday to be observed by Mennonite World Conference member churches.

The International Day of Peace was established by the United Nations Resolution on 30 November 1981 to be observed for the first time on the third Tuesday of September 1982 to coincide with the opening of the General Assembly. Later, the UN General Assembly set 21 September as the permanent date for the International Day of Peace. The resolution states:

"The Assembly, reaffirming the contribution that the observance and celebration of the International Day of Peace makes in strengthening the ideals of peace and alleviating tensions and causes of conflict...". It further declares "...that the International Day of Peace shall henceforth be observed as a day of global ceasefire and non-violence, an invitation to all nations and people to honour a cessation of hostilities for the duration of the Day; (and that the Assembly) invites all Member States, organizations of the United Nations system, regional and non-governmental organizations and individuals to commemorate, in an appropriate manner, the International Day of Peace, including through education and public awareness, and to cooperate with the United Nations in the establishment of the global ceasefire."

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In light of this, the Mennonite World Conference Peace Commission, beginning on 11 March 2006, decided that,

1. The Sunday nearest to 21 September (the International Day of Peace) would be designated as a Peace Sunday to be observed in our churches around the world. For 2017, this will be 24 September.
2. The MWC Peace Commission staff would prepare suggestions for scripture readings, prayer concerns, reflections from our global communion, and ideas of activities to help churches observe this day.
3. Churches are invited to report back to the Peace Commission about their activities for this day.
4. Churches who already observe a different Sunday as Peace Sunday are encouraged to continue with their practice, and are invited to include the global church concerns in their prayers on the global Peace Sunday.

MWC would like to hear how you observed Peace Sunday. If you have stories or reports of activities and worship events in your congregations, please send these to MWC Peace Commission (see email address below), so that we can share them with our global church community. God's blessings to you as you continue your work towards Christ's peace!

Yours in Christ's peace,



Andrew G. Suderman  
Peace Commission Secretary  
[AndrewSuderman@mw-cmm.org](mailto:AndrewSuderman@mw-cmm.org)