

Armistice Day Declaration

Why should we celebrate Armistice Day? Surely Armistice Day is not a '*Day of Celebration.*' Are we celebrating

- Soldiers murdering each other for God or for country?
- Dead bodies splattered all over the landscape?
- Innocent babies broken by unwelcome bombs?
- The victory of one nation over a humiliated neighbour?
- Heartbroken mothers and sons with post-traumatic stress?

Rather than uphold Armistice Day as a day of celebration, we declare our intent to make Armistice Day a day of commemoration AND a day of reformation in accord with the principles of the pioneer pacifist, Charles Strong.

As a *Day of Commemoration* we remember,

- Men and women who sacrificed their lives for a cause they believed was valid, regardless of the consequences,
- Church leaders who believed they were involved in a just war, regardless of the message of Scriptures,
- Citizens who were conditioned to believe that the 'enemy' was evil, regardless of their common faith or empathy,

As a *Day of Reformation* we intend to,

- Rethink the arguments that justify war and recognise the validity of the arguments that justify peace,
- Revive forgiveness and reconciliation as more viable agencies than force or control in conflict situations,
- Oppose all forms of war and conflict by promoting peace as an expression of personal renewal, communal compassion, environmental revival and global well-being.

Why do so many countries and governments focus on power rather than peace?

Why do so many communities and neighbourhoods focus on control rather than compassion?

Why do many families and individuals focus on force rather than forgiveness?