

Interview with Rev. Dr. George Ault

Holly:

Hi George, thank you for calling me. I am leading a team to consider the process for our church to become a 'UCC Just Peace Church.' Our church recently restored and reinstalled the Peace Pole that is placed at the sanctuary entrance. Our team thought it would be good to publicize the Peace Pole. We are interested in learning more about it and inform the members of its history. We understand that you were involved with this.

Rev. Ault:

I am very glad to see that the pole was refurbished. I was the minister of the church from 1985-2015. The pole was donated to the church by Claudia and me in honor of my mother, Helen M Scott, who passed in 2000. A few years later, it was made and installed at the sanctuary entrance, where it has stood since.

Holly:

What inspired you to choose the Peace Pole?

Rev. Ault:

Well, Peace Poles became popular in the US in the '70s. It originated in Japan in 1955 in the aftermath of World War II. There are several locations in Sedona, including the Stupa Peace Park, the Sedona Library, and other places. We thought that this would be an appropriate gift for our church. Peace isn't an antiwar statement, but we see it more in terms of justice and conflict resolution.

Holly:

Yes, the UCC is officially recognized as the first denomination to declare itself as a "Just Peace Church". What was the process that you needed to take for church approval?

Rev. Ault:

I was the pastor of the church at the time. I presented the idea to the church council, where it was approved. It was a simple process.

Holly:

It is a very special gift to our church. We appreciate that it stands outside and greets our church members and visitors as they enter. Thank you for this gift and thank you for your time.

