

Conscientious Objector Statement

William Daniel

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My name is William Daniel, and I want to register as a conscientious objector with Montclair Presbyterian Church in Oakland, California, and with my denomination, the Presbyterian Church (USA). I am against all forms of war and here are my reasons why.

-Wars solve nothing.

-Wars lead to bloodshed, hunger, destruction, and long-lasting societal issues that are passed down multiple generations.

-No one is quick to forgive after a war—yet from a perspective of faith, that is what we are called to do, to forgive. God tells us to do so.

-I grew up in a Christian home and in a church where I was taught that you're supposed to love everyone, not just your neighbor, as yourself. There is no love in war, we dehumanize opposing soldiers as we shoot at them, classify the innocent civilians who get killed by bombshells as "collateral damage", and turn our youth with promising futures into broken human beings with lives full of only PTSD and depression.

-I also learned that Jesus never used violence to solve anything. He was able to spread peace and love with words and kind actions.

-I'm not a passive pacifist. I have a vocation—a calling—to bring people together through sport. Ideally as a player, but also as someone employed in the business side of Football (soccer), I will be a promotor of the beautiful game's ability to unify people around a love for team and country without violence or destruction. The late great Pelé once was credited with stopping a civil war because people wanted to see him play. In the time since Mohammed Salah—who is Muslim—joined Liverpool F.C. in 2017, Islamophobic comments online dropped by 50% in the city and hate crime by 20%. That's how powerful the game is, and I want to be promoting the peace and goodwill Football brings to the world. I believe that not only children, but people of any age are happiest through playing games, and Football, the most famous sport of them all, reaches the biggest population.

-In the Fall of 2023 I will begin my education at Leeds Beckett University in England, where I will study Sports Business Management and where I will also play at i2i International Academy. In my education and in my play, I will follow my call to try and make the world more peaceful by doing what I love, and by what God wants me to do.

-Inspired by my faith, I want to bring peace to the world, and I know war cannot bring it. My calling is to bring peace through the beautiful game.