

TO PROMOTE PEACE, JUSTICE, AND RECONCILIATION IN THE HOLY LAND

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- WHEREAS, the current strategy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), adopted by the Churchwide Assembly in Orlando, August, 2005, and reaffirmed at the Churchwide Assembly in Chicago, August, 2007, urges ELCA members to learn about and support the Christians of the Holy Land, in particular the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Jerusalem and the Holy Land (ELCJHL) (d 2005 Pre-Assembly Report, Section IV, pp 25-31); and
- WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Chicago Synod, under the leadership of the Working Group on the Middle East (WGME), has adopted resolutions at past assemblies encouraging its members to learn about and support the Lutheran institutions associated with ELCJHL; and
- WHEREAS, the current political, military, and economic conditions in Israel and Palestine have further deteriorated so that the future existence of these Lutheran institutions in the Holy Land is threatened; and
- WHEREAS, the separation barrier/wall has completely surrounded and imprisoned Palestinians in certain population centers, including Bethlehem, thereby making it extremely difficult for geographically divided families to see each other, for students and teachers to get to school, for the sick and dying to get to medical care, for workers to get to jobs, for landowners to access their field and orchards; and
- WHEREAS, the Rev. Dr. Munib Younan, Lutheran bishop of the ELCJHL has said, "The wall that is surrounding us in Palestine is growing every day into a tighter concrete noose around our cities, towns, homes and churches. In the face of oppression and violence, we are called to be prophets for justice, instruments of peace, voices of hope, and hands of healing and reconciliation" (Walls conference, Wittenberg Center, Germany, November 2006); and
- WHEREAS, our own Bishop Wayne N. Miller has visited the Holy Land this year and has confirmed the conditions described above; therefore, be it
- RESOLVED, that we thank our bishop, Wayne N. Miller, and his wife, Pam, for taking the time to visit the Holy Land and see firsthand the conditions of the Lutheran Church there; and be it further

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40 RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Chicago Synod Assembly urge each congregation to
41 demonstrate its commitment to the ELCA's advocacy initiative and to the
42 ELCJHL, its schools and agencies, Augusta Victoria Hospital, and the Lutheran
43 World Federation housing development on the Mount of Olives by praying
44 regularly for peace, justice, and reconciliation in the Holy Land; and be it further

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46 RESOLVED, that the Assembly designate November as "Palestinian Christian Solidarity
47 Month," urging congregations to plan and implement a way to awaken their
48 membership to the critical situation in the Holy Land; and be it further

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50 RESOLVED, that the Assembly ask each pastor in the synod to encourage members to attend
51 one of the events sponsored by the Working Group on the Middle East or other
52 similar educational events; and be it finally

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54 RESOLVED, that the Assembly urge leaders and members to become active advocates for
55 peace, justice, and reconciliation by contacting members of the Administration
56 and Congress on behalf of Palestinian Christian concerns, and to consider
57 visiting Israel and Palestine.

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60 Submitted by:

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