

## Resolution 4 – 2013 Greater Milwaukee Synod Assembly Accompaniment, Awareness-Raising and Advocacy for the People of the Holy Land

*Submitted by Ascension Lutheran Church, Milwaukee*

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Whereas, The prolonged Israeli occupation of and ongoing illegal Israeli settlement in the West Bank remain obstacles to peace and cause a great deal of suffering for Israelis and Palestinians; and

Whereas, The ELCA rejoices that our Palestinian brother in Christ, Bishop Munib Younan, is president of the Lutheran World Federation, and gives thanks for our special relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL) that is marked by mutual love and concern for lasting peace and justice; and

Whereas, The *Peace Not Walls* campaign of the ELCA is focused on Accompaniment, Awareness-raising and Advocacy as three aspects of engagement in response to the situation in Israel-Palestine; and

Whereas, The 2011 Churchwide Assembly adopted a resolution supporting positive investment in Palestinian goods and services and commending the “ELCA Economic Social Criteria Investment Screens” to its members, congregations, synods and agencies; and

Whereas, The 1995 ELCA social statement, *For Peace in God’s World*, reminds us that bringing about peace with justice is the work of the church, and in support for just political structures “[acknowledges] that the responsible use of sanctions may on occasion be the most effective and least harmful measure to lead states to stop oppressing their people...”; and

Whereas, On October 5, 2012, 15 US Christian leaders, including ELCA Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson, signed a letter urging Congress to “undertake careful scrutiny to ensure that our aid is not supporting actions by the government of Israel that undermine prospects for peace”; therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, That this synod support the work of *Peace Not Walls* and our sisters and brothers in the ELCJHL through advocacy work that asks members of Congress and the current Administration to do everything in their power to bring about peace with justice for the people of Israel and Palestine;

**RESOLVED**, That this synod encourage members of our church to listen to the cries of our Palestinian sisters and brothers through study of the *Kairos Palestine* document; to visit the region to speak directly with Israelis and Palestinians; and to seek resources like those provided by *Peace Not Walls* that have up-to-date, reliable information about the situation;

**RESOLVED**, That this Assembly memorialize the Churchwide Assembly to commit to socially responsible economic practices by 1) developing and implementing for the ELCA social-criteria investment screens that pertain specifically to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; 2) urging members with money invested in Portico to make individual choices about how their retirement funds are invested, so as to avoid supporting companies that benefit from the occupation; 3) encouraging individuals to invest in Palestinian economic endeavors and to boycott products and services provided by companies that benefit from and support Israel’s occupation of Palestine; and

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***RESOLVED***; That this synod declare this year one of *Accompaniment With the People of the Holy Land*, 1) promoting the observation of the 24<sup>th</sup> day of each month as a worldwide day of prayer and solidarity with the ELCJHL; and 2) forming a synod-wide committee to coordinate education, consciousness raising and action to promote *Accompaniment With the People of the Holy Land*.