

*The following resolution was adopted by the 2009 Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod Assembly during its Spring Session on May 8-9 at the Kellogg Conference Center of Gallaudet University in Washington, D.C. "Whereas" clauses are listed as background for voting members. The Assembly votes on "resolved" clauses only.*

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### **Israel and Palestine**

- WHEREAS the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) continues to stand firm in its commitment to seek peace, justice, and security for all Israelis and Palestinians through its strategy of engagement, "Peace not Walls: Stand for Justice in the Holy Land;" and
- WHEREAS the Bishops Academy of the ELCA and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC) completed a trip to the Holy Land in January 2009, as a witness for peace with justice for all people and as an expression of accompaniment with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL) and ministries of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF); and
- WHEREAS clergy and lay leaders of the ELCJHL have continually urged the ELCA to remember them in their prayers and in their support of the vital ministries of word and sacrament, inclusive education, ecumenical and interfaith understanding and humanitarian assistance that the ELCJHL provides: and
- WHEREAS Gaza has been under a nearly total blockade of all goods and commodities for almost two years, and the tragic loss of life and the continuing loss of liberty in Gaza--both before, during, and following the tragic conflict of December 2008 and January 2009--flow directly from the continuing exercise of control the government of Israel exerts over Palestinian life in Gaza, East Jerusalem and the West Bank; and
- WHEREAS the Executive Committee of the World Council of Churches (WCC), responding to the continuing humanitarian crisis in Gaza, has called on all churches to even greater engagement in joint efforts for peace\*; and
- WHEREAS the Metropolitan Washington D.C. Synod of the ELCA has strengthened its own efforts in awareness building as well as its commitment to the Peace not Walls strategy for engagement for peace with justice in the Holy Land through its March 29, 2009 symposium, "Lutheran Witness in Palestine: Grace Under Pressure"; therefore be it

RESOLVED that the Metropolitan Washington D.C. Synod in assembly commends the bishops of the ELCA and the ELCIC for their courageous witness and their stand for justice and peacemaking in the Holy Land; and be it further

RESOLVED that the Metropolitan Washington D.C. Synod in assembly encourage the congregations of this synod to pray for the people of the ELCJHL and all the people in Israel and Palestine; and be it further

RESOLVED that the Metropolitan Washington D.C. Synod in assembly memorialize the ELCA Churchwide Assembly, meeting in Minneapolis, August 17-23, 2009 to encourage all synods and congregations to renew and strengthen their efforts toward building awareness of the daily injustice and insecurity faced by Palestinians and Israelis and to advocate for a viable and just path toward true peace and security in the Holy Land; and be it further

RESOLVED that the Metropolitan Washington D.C. Synod in assembly memorialize the ELCA Churchwide Assembly to encourage each ELCA synod to sponsor and implement at least one event on its territory to present the ELCA strategy "Peace not Walls" to educate congregations and individuals as to the present circumstances in Israel and Palestine; and be it further

RESOLVED that the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod in assembly memorialize the ELCA Churchwide assembly that the ELCA continue to partner with other organizations and agencies to help alleviate the suffering of the people of Gaza and Israel, to work with people of faith and good will throughout the world to bring about the just creation of two interdependent, secure states for Palestinians and Israelis and, by so doing, to work to prevent such calamity from ever occurring again in that land.

\* World Council of Churches Executive Committee Statement on the Gaza War, Feb. 17-20, 2009, Bossey Switzerland