

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

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3 WHEREAS, the current Evangelical Lutheran Church in America *Strategy for Engagement in Israel and*
4 *Palestine*, adopted (CA05.06.23) by the Churchwide Assembly in Orlando, August 2005,
5 and reaffirmed at the Churchwide Assembly in Chicago, August 2007 (CA07.06.30), urges
6 ELCA members to learn about and support the Christians of the Holy Land, in particular
7 the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL); and

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9 WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Chicago Synod, under the leadership of the Working Group on the
10 Middle East (WGME), has adopted resolutions at past assemblies encouraging its
11 members to learn about and support the Lutheran institutions associated with
12 ELCJHL; and

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14 WHEREAS, the current political, military, and economic conditions in Israel and Palestine have
15 further deteriorated so that the future existence of these Lutheran institutions in the
16 Holy Land is threatened; and

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18 WHEREAS, the separation barrier/wall has completely surrounded and imprisoned Palestinians in
19 certain population centers, including Bethlehem, thereby making it extremely difficult
20 for geographically divided families to see each other, for students and teachers to get
21 to school, for the sick and dying to get to medical care, and for workers to get to
22 jobs; and

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24 WHEREAS, the Rev. Dr. Munib Younan, bishop of the ELCJHL has said, "The wall that is
25 surrounding us in Palestine is growing every day into a tighter concrete noose around
26 our cities, towns, homes and churches. In the face of oppression and violence, we
27 are called to be prophets for justice, instruments of peace, voices of hope, and hands
28 of healing and reconciliation . . ." (Walls conference, Wittenberg Center, Germany,
29 November 2006); therefore, be it

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31 RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Chicago Synod Assembly urge each congregation to
32 demonstrate its commitment to the ELCA's *Strategy for Engagement in Israel and*
33 *Palestine* and to the ELCJHL, its schools and agencies, Augusta Victoria Hospital, and
34 the Lutheran World Federation housing development on the Mount of Olives by (1)
35 praying regularly for peace, justice, and reconciliation in the Holy Land and (2)
36 annually sending a defined contribution to the ELCJHL; and be it further

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38 RESOLVED, that the assembly set an example for the congregations by requesting that the
39 synod's 2010 budget include significant support for the ministries of the ELCJHL; and
40 be it further

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42 RESOLVED, that the assembly strongly urge the bishop to attend the special Conference of
43 Bishops meeting scheduled for January 5-15, 2009, which will be held in the Holy
44 Land, and that the bishop report to the synod membership about his visit and ways
45 that the synod might respond to the conditions he observed; and be it further

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47 RESOLVED, that the assembly designate November as "Palestinian Christian Solidarity Month,"
48 urging congregations to plan and implement events to awaken their members to the
49 critical situation in the Holy Land and that the assembly ask each pastor to encourage
50 members to attend one of the events sponsored by the Working Group on the Middle
51 East or other educational events; and be it finally

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

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58 Submitted by:

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60 The Rev. Paul Koch, Ebenezer Lutheran Church, Chicago, Ill.

61 The Rev. Sheri Delvin, St. Paul Lutheran Church, Evanston, Ill.