

A resolution concerning the banning of nuclear weapons

Whereas, “Church in Society: a Lutheran Perspective,” an ELCA social teaching statement, calls for the church to engage in moral deliberations regarding governmental policy, and “discern when to support and when to confront society’s cultural patterns, values, and powers”; and

Whereas, the ELCA social teaching statement “For Peace in God’s World” calls for the church to engage actively in making peace not war, naming and resisting “idols that lead to false security, injustice, and war, and [calling] for repentance”; and

Whereas, nuclear weapons programs potentially divert public funds and expertise from health care, education, repair of the infrastructure, disaster relief, and other vital services; and

Whereas, the entire life cycle of nuclear weapons (from mining to disposal) causes harm for generations, even if the weapons are never exploded; and

Whereas, the risk of a nuclear war and global annihilation has been greatly increased due to recent circumstances; therefore, be it

Resolved, that the Office of the Bishop of the Minneapolis Area Synod communicate to members of Congress who represent members of congregations within the synod boundaries and to Minnesota U.S. Senators the request for them to take a leadership role in efforts to bring together the nine nuclear nations to work toward the total elimination of nuclear weapons as stipulated in the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

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1 **Background to the resolution concerning the banning of nuclear weapons**
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4 **From “For Peace in God’s World”, ELCA Social Statement, p. 18-19:**
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6 “Give high priority to arms control and reduction. We particularly urge a sharp reduction in the
7 number of weapons of mass destruction. We call for arms control agreements that are substantial,
8 equitable, verifiable, and progressive.¹⁶ We support mutual confidence-building measures to
9 improve mutually assured security. In particular, we give priority to:

- 10 • ◆ agreements among the leading nuclear powers to reduce their nuclear stockpiles and to
11 decrease the possibility of nuclear confrontation or accident;
12 • ◆ the successful negotiation of a renewed Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty, the
13 strengthening of mechanisms to monitor and enforce nuclear treaties, and efforts that move
14 toward the elimination of nuclear weapons;

15
16 Control and reduce the arms trade. Heavily armed nations continue to spend billions on arms. As
17 one of the world’s leading arms exporters, the United States has special responsibility to reduce
18 arms sales and to seek proper international control agreements over the worldwide sale and
19 transfer of arms by the major exporters.”
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21 **From a Prior ELCA statement**
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23 “We call upon the governments of the United States and other nuclear powers to persist in the
24 efforts to arrive at effective multilateral agreements on the cessation of all kinds of nuclear
25 weapons testing with provision for adequate inspection and control. Toward this end we believe
26 that a moratorium on testing should be continued until every opportunity to secure such effective
27 agreements has been utilized. We advocate this position not only because hazards to health will
28 thereby be kept at a minimum but also because agreement on the cessation of testing could serve
29 to allay suspicion and provide an international experience in inspection and control which are
30 deemed essential to the regulation and reduction of armaments in a manner that will not
31 endanger the security of any nation.
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33 Recognizing that an open-ended armaments race poses grave peril for ourselves and all nations,
34 we urge the governments of the United States and Canada to engage in untiring search for new
35 and viable forms of arms limitations and control. We believe that this requires dealing
36 realistically with the unsolved problems of the cold war. Any approach should therefore include
37 efforts directed at relaxation on international tensions and settlement of political problems, and
38 calls for the readiness for step-by-step progress and patience with limited achievement.”

39 *--A Statement of the United Lutheran Church in America, 1960*
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