

A memorial 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 Minneapolis Area Synod acting in assembly memorialize the 2022 Churchwide Assembly to engage the ELCA United Nations and Advocacy offices to take a leadership role in current opportunities to bring together the nine nuclear nations to work toward the implementation of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons; and be it further

Resolved, that the Office of the Presiding Bishop communicate the intent of the ELCA United Nations and Advocacy offices to take such a leadership role to the appropriate federal officials; and be it finally

Resolved, that the Minneapolis Area Synod acting in assembly memorialize the 2022 Churchwide Assembly to urge Portico Benefits, the ELCA Foundation, and other ELCA-related entities to divest from the companies that are involved in producing nuclear weapons if the companies do not stop making the weaponry.

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Background information for a resolution concerning the banning of nuclear weapons

Twenty-six companies are currently involved in the production of nuclear weapons.

From “For Peace in God’s World”, ELCA Social Statement, p. 18-19:

“Give high priority to arms control and reduction. We particularly urge a sharp reduction in the number of weapons of mass destruction. We call for arms control agreements that are substantial, equitable, verifiable, and progressive.¹⁶ We support mutual confidence-building measures to improve mutually assured security. In particular, we give priority to:

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

Control and reduce the arms trade. Heavily armed nations continue to spend billions on arms. As one of the world’s leading arms exporters, the United States has special responsibility to reduce arms sales and to seek proper international control agreements over the worldwide sale and transfer of arms by the major exporters.”

From a Prior ELCA statement

“We call upon the governments of the United States and other nuclear powers to persist in the efforts to arrive at effective multilateral agreements on the cessation of all kinds of nuclear weapons testing with provision for adequate inspection and control. Toward this end we believe that a moratorium on testing should be continued until every opportunity to secure such effective agreements has been utilized. We advocate this position not only because hazards to health will thereby be kept at a minimum but also because agreement on the cessation of testing could serve to allay suspicion and provide an international experience in inspection and control which are deemed essential to the regulation and reduction of armaments in a manner that will not endanger the security of any nation.

Recognizing that an open-ended armaments race poses grave peril for ourselves and all nations, we urge the governments of the United States and Canada to engage in untiring search for new and viable forms of arms limitations and control. We believe that this requires dealing realistically with the unsolved problems of the cold war. Any approach should therefore include efforts directed at relaxation on international tensions and settlement of political problems, and calls for the readiness for step-by-step progress and patience with limited achievement.”

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