

Memorial: Response to the Destruction of Palestinians

WHEREAS the ceasefire in Gaza requires Christians to take urgent steps toward recovery and healing,¹ and

WHEREAS the church calls all disciples to be advocates for peacemaking that strives for human rights, political alternatives to war, social justice, control of the arms trade, and creative means of working for peace in God's world, and

WHEREAS 2024 was the deadliest year on record for Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank, and the displacement of millions of people in Gaza and Lebanon occurred even while the ELCA has called for an end to unconditional aid to the State of Israel,² and

WHEREAS some definitions of antisemitism equate opposition to policies of the State of Israel with antisemitism, target political criticism of Israel on college campuses, and enable false claims of antisemitism making it difficult to identify real incidents of antisemitism,³ and

WHEREAS the ELCA Churchwide Assembly in 2016 voted (with 90% in favor) to develop a human rights social criteria investment screen to apply to investments in the State of Israel, and voted (with 82% in favor) for the U.S. to link financial and military aid to Israel to Israel's compliance with internationally recognized human rights standards and other criteria⁴; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Minneapolis Area Synod in assembly memorialize the 2025 Churchwide Assembly of the ELCA to direct the churchwide organization to increase awareness of the need for unity in a region that is home to Muslims, Jews and Christians, and use resources to support efforts that are needed to recover, rebuild, and unify by investing in humanitarian aid and rebuilding of Gaza and other impacted areas of occupied Palestine through support for established institutions and through gifts designated for "Middle East Crisis", and

- to amplify demand for the US to cease financial support for arms and related technologies to Israel as we rebuke oppression and the senseless deaths of innocents; and
- to reject definitions of antisemitism that do not distinguish between hatred of Jews and criticism of the State of Israel, and all Islamophobia and antisemitism which harms our Muslim and Jewish neighbors locally and globally, and
- to direct the churchwide organization, in accordance with the 2016 screening decision, to ask the ELCA and its congregations to review current and future investments that profit from Israel's violations of Palestinian human rights.

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References:

- 41 ¹ 2025 Statement on ceasefire from Lutheran Disaster Relief, [https://www.elca.org/our-work/relief-and-](https://www.elca.org/our-work/relief-and-development/lutheran-disaster-response/our-impact/middle-east-crisis)
42 development/lutheran-disaster-response/our-impact/middle-east-crisis
- 43 ² ELCA Churchwide Assembly, August 2016; CA16.05.13
- 44 ³ 2023 Curriculum on Antisemitism from a Framework of Collective Liberation,
45 <https://www.antisemitismcurriculum.org>
- 46 ⁴ ELCA Churchwide Assembly, August 2016; CA 16.06.31, CA16.05.13 ("the 2016 screening decision")