

## Resolution 24-02 Palestinian Advocacy and Dismantling Christian Zionism in our Churches.

**Whereas**, The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) in 2005 established the initiative, “Peace Not Walls: Stand for Justice in the Holy Land” (recently renamed “SUMUD<sup>1</sup>: for Justice in Palestine and Israel”); and

**Whereas**, The ELCA, in its Social Statement *For Peace in God’s World*, has committed to serve as “a reconciling presence” and to promote respect for human rights, particularly for “groups most susceptible to violations, especially all minorities, women, and children<sup>2</sup>”; and

**Whereas**, The ELCA is in relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL); and

**Whereas**, The ELCA Presiding Bishop, Elizabeth Eaton, on October 13, 2023 denounced the attacks and hostage-taking on October 7, 2023, by Hamas and has denounced the subsequent disproportionate death toll among Palestinian civilians; as reported by the United Nations, more than thirty-four thousand civilians have been killed in Gaza since October 7, 2023<sup>3</sup>; <https://elca.org/News-and-Events/8207>; therefore

**Be it Resolved**, The Florida Bahamas Synod in Assembly laments both the destruction of Gaza’s infrastructure, housing, schools and universities, hospitals, and places of worship- and the millions of people who are experiencing displacement, facing malnutrition, and starvation, as a result primarily of Israel’s continuing air strikes and blocking entry of humanitarian aid trucks; and

**Be it further Resolved**, That individuals and congregations of the Florida Bahamas Synod are recommended to:

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<sup>1</sup> The name *sumud*, Arabic “steadfastness,” was chosen at the suggestion of our Palestinian Lutheran companions. 2022-2023 Review Summary and Recommendations. Retrieved from [https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/PNW\\_Review\\_Summary\\_and\\_Recommendations\\_Official.pdf](https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/PNW_Review_Summary_and_Recommendations_Official.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> *For Peace in God’s World*, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, 1995, pp 5, 14. Retrieved from <https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/PeaceSS.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> According to the United Nations Secretary-General’s press encounter of 30 April 2024, 34,000 have been killed in Gaza since the inception of the 2023-24 hostilities. <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/secretary-generals-press-encounter-gaza-0>

- Become informed about the SUMUD initiative of the ELCA: <http://elca.org/sumud>; and
- Devote at least 3 hours of adult education time or special events within the next three months to learn more about the conflict and occupation, Christian Zionism<sup>4</sup>, and its effects using books, articles video or online ELCA approved resources provided by Palestineportal.org<sup>5</sup> or SUMUD; and
- Become informed that there are Christians and Christian Churches in Gaza; and
- Use ELCA, SUMUD, Kairos Document<sup>6</sup> and other recommended resources to learn about the history of the region and current causes for conflict; and
- Consider signing up for ELCA monthly Advocacy Alerts - “Middle East Network” at <http://elca.org/sumud>; and
- Pray for Palestinians and Israelis who work to create a future of justice, equality, reconciliation, and peace for all in both communities; and
- Stand in solidarity with all who are suffering in Palestine and Israel and support the work of the ELCJHL (Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land), LWF (Lutheran World Federation), ALAMEH (Association of Lutherans of Arab and Middle Eastern Heritage), in bringing comfort, support, accountability, and relief.

**Submitted by:** The Congregation Council of St. Michael Evangelical Lutheran Church, Wellington, Florida.

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<sup>4</sup> *Major Issues: Christian Zionism*. Retrieved from [ELCA Memorandum](#).

<sup>5</sup> *PalestinePortal.org Your Resource for a Just Peace*. <https://www.palestineportal.org/>

<sup>6</sup> Kairos Document is a theological statement written by South African theologians in response to Apartheid regime and was adopted by 13 ecumenical Palestinian theologians in 2009. [Kairos Document \(kairospalestine.ps\)](#).

