

Resolution for 2024 West Virginia Annual Conference Regarding Peace in Gaza and Israel

Whereas the geographical region near the Southeastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea holds a unique place in the hearts and minds of Jews, Christians, and Muslims as the source of our respective religious traditions,

and whereas the area is home to people of many faiths, and has been subject to conflicting claims of ownership for centuries,

and whereas the land contains important destinations for countless pilgrims who visit sacred sites as part of their spiritual heritage, and is also home to many of God's children who live under a constant cloud of potential violence – violence that has become all too real in recent times,

and whereas large numbers of innocent people have lost their lives, their loved ones, and their homes as a result of the conflict between Hamas militants and the State of Israel,

and whereas the Social Principles of the United Methodist Church state that war is “incompatible with Christian teaching”,

and whereas some recognize the theory of “Just War”, which insists that any military response be proportional,

and whereas the Israel Defense Force response to the Hamas atrocities of October 7 have been far from proportional,

and whereas thousands of Palestinians in Gaza are suffering due to displacement, lack of food, and lack of medical care,

and whereas relief supplies and personnel are being made available by numerous agencies and parties, but are being severely restricted by the current ruling government of the State of Israel.

Therefore be it resolved that as United Methodist Christians, we call on all political entities to carefully consider the harm their activities may cause to innocent civilians, and to take steps to prevent death or injury to noncombatants.

be it further resolved that Hamas, Hezbollah, and the IDF must immediately cease the violent activities that have caused unnecessary destruction of property and harm to human beings. Violence begets violence, and is directly contrary to the teaching and example of Jesus.

be it further resolved that under no circumstances should anyone be deprived of food, water, medical needs, or other life necessities. The denial of humanitarian aid is unconscionable under any circumstance, and the political entities involved must not impede the delivery of basic needs to the suffering people of Gaza.

be it further resolved that we urge our leaders to call for an immediate release and return of all hostages, an immediate and permanent ceasefire by all parties, and to use appropriate means to influence a peaceful resolution to the struggles of Palestinians and Israelis alike to assure all the residents of the region a place to live in peace, harmony, and prosperity in fulfillment of the promise to Abraham's descendants, and the prophecy that all people will be blessed through that promise.

be it further resolved that humanitarian relief in the form of food, medical supplies, and other life necessities always be available, and that our government must insist that this relief not be interrupted.