

HOPE ALONE

2026 Metro D.C. Synod Assembly
Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Gaithersburg
Saturday, June 6



METRO D.C. SYNOD
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN
CHURCH IN AMERICA

Resolution 2026-004

Submitted: April 1, 2026

Title: **A Call for Boycotting Companies Complicit in Israel's Genocide in Gaza and Ongoing Occupation of the West Bank and Gaza**

Sponsor: Middle East Peace Team, Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod ELCA

Whereas, for almost four decades, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) has raised awareness, advocated, accompanied, and supported Lutheran institutions in Palestine; has spoken out against the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza; and has called for prayers for peace with justice; and

Whereas, Palestinian Lutherans and others are outspoken about the genocide that the Israeli government is engaged in, and the Kairos Palestine II document, released in 2025 by the Palestinian Christian Ecumenical Initiative, openly calls for measures of costly solidarity and mutual support and for clear and courageous positions, including boycotts as effective forms of creative resistance rooted in the logic of love and nonviolence; and

Whereas, members of the Metropolitan Washington, DC Synod's Middle East Peace Team (MEPT) have participated in the development of a "Boycott Planning Guide," a resource of the US-Lutheran Palestine Israel Justice Network (US-LPIJN), and the MEPT recommends the Guide and will assist congregations in the use of the Guide upon request; and

Whereas, the boycotting of Israeli products and Israeli and international companies complicit in sustaining the occupation of Palestinian land is a non-violent way of protesting the humanitarian crisis in Gaza and the expansion of illegal settlements and systematic ethnic cleansing in the West Bank; and

Whereas, boycotting companies that are complicit in sustaining the Israeli occupation can be an effective tactic of exerting economic and political

pressure until Israel meets its obligations under international law and ends its occupation of the West Bank and Gaza--thus allowing for Palestinian self-determination, free and fair elections, a functioning judiciary, and peace and security for both Palestinians and Israelis; and

Whereas, boycotts may range from making personal consumer choices, to congregations collectively agreeing to engage in a boycott, to the synod undertaking a synod-wide boycott; and

Whereas, the ELCA has affirmed in its social statement “For Peace in God’s World” its opposition to genocide and other egregious violations of human rights and has in its “Boycott Policies and Procedures”³ document defined a boycott and set forth ethical, procedural, and pastoral considerations for the adoption, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and ending of boycotts; therefore, and be it

RESOLVED that the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod respond to the calls issued in the Kairos Palestine II document and by Lutheran partners in Palestine by encouraging individuals and congregations to study the “Boycott Planning Guide,” and be it further

RESOLVED that the Metropolitan Washington, DC, Synod stand for justice and human dignity by acting in solidarity with Palestinian Lutherans, Palestinian Christians of many denominations, Palestinian Muslims, Jewish coalitions working for peace, and other people who protest the illegal occupation of Palestine, the humanitarian crisis in Gaza, and the expansion of illegal settlements, by encouraging individual members, congregations, and the Synod Council to boycotting Israeli products and Israeli and international companies that are complicit in the genocide against Palestinians and in maintaining the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza.

Endnotes:

¹ the 2025 ELCA Churchwide Assembly by a 95% majority vote reaffirmed the ELCA’s commitment to justice, peace, the sanctity of every human life, a two-state solution for Israel and Palestine, and its unwavering opposition to antisemitism, and at the same time recognized “with grief and moral urgency...the profound human toll of the violence and displacement against Palestinian civilians which constitutes a crisis of international conscience.” *Summary_of_Actions_2025_CWA_d pages 6, 7*
[_actions-of-the-2025-churchwide-assembly/](#)

² The US-Lutheran Palestine Israel Justice Network is a Spirit-led, volunteer-driven, mostly Lutheran network of individuals that speak to the church, not for the church. The Vision of the US-LPIJN is equity,

justice, and peace for Palestinians and Israelis and an end to the Israeli occupation of Palestine. The US-LPIJN Mission is to support and augment initiatives of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL), the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), The Lutheran World Federation (LWF), The Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI), Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP), and other faith-based organizations and secular groups. The network aims to stimulate grassroots conversations on advocacy and activism that may help the ELCA advance its Middle East policies; be at the leading edge in supporting justice for Palestinians and Israelis; and share strategies, ideas, and best practices with one another and with other like-minded networks.

³ “Boycott Policies and Procedures,” ELCA Corporate Responsibility,
<https://resources.elca.org/corporate-social-responsibility/boycott-policy/>

⁴ the 2025 ELCA Churchwide Assembly named the Israeli crimes against Palestinians in Gaza as genocide when it directed the Office of the Presiding Bishop to call on the US government to recognize and work to end the genocide against the Palestinian people, to halt military assistance to Israel used to devastate Gaza, to investigate the use of US military aid to Israel to ensure compliance with US and international human rights laws, to redouble its efforts to end human rights violations in Gaza and the West Bank, to recognize Palestine as a sovereign state and support its full membership in the United Nations, to reject proposals to remove Palestinians from Gaza and the West Bank, address Palestinians catastrophic living conditions, and to work to end rampant settler violence and vandalism against Palestinians in the West Bank.

⁵ UN resolution A/RES/ES-10/24 (2024), countless other UN resolutions, studies by human rights organizations, and ELCA statements make it clear that the Israeli occupation gravely violates Palestinian human rights.

⁶ the 2025 ELCA Churchwide Assembly action “encourages ELCA members, congregations, synods, and appropriate churchwide units to advocate for human rights, justice, and peace for all Palestinians and Israelis and support policies that bring an end to the occupation of Gaza and the West Bank, while maintaining the right and sovereignty of the State of Israel to exist, and promote a just and peaceful resolution of the conflict.”