

Mennonite Church to Divest in Protest of Israeli Policies

Editor CEC reports: Other Mainline denominations are following the tiny Mennonite's long held pro-peace example. It reported by Twitter that: Members of the Mennonite Church USA voted overwhelmingly in support of a resolution condemning Israel's violations of Palestinian rights. (Mennonite Palestine-Israel Network)

In addition to supporting divestment, the Mennonites encourage their members to work with elected US officials to advocate to end military aid and arms sales to Israel as well as to pressure Israel to freeze settlement construction in the occupied West Bank.

The resolution calls on the faithful to urge US lawmakers to respect the civil rights of Palestinian citizens of Israel and the rights of refugees, end the occupation, and work for a just peace in accordance with international law.

Members are also being urged to critically 'engage' with Christian Zionism within their own church and the broader Christian community, condemn anti-Semitism, strengthen ties between Christian, Muslim, Jewish and Palestinian groups and to study the 2009 Kairos Palestine document.

Editor CEC adds: The Mennonite has been a consistent advocate for peace for as long as we can remember, and for ending the ongoing armed occupation of the Palestinian People. It has remained a beacon for many larger denominations now demanding peace, not only in Palestine, but all over the Middle East. No less than five major Protestant denominations have passed various resolutions at national conferences and offer educational material on the Bible's call for Peacemaking.

A recent Associated press article in the Washington Post, [Mennonite Church to divest in protest of Israeli policies](#), states: In previous years, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the United Church of Christ approved divestment measures. The Episcopal Church rejected a similar proposal at a national meeting two years ago, as did the 12.8 million-member United Methodist Church, the largest mainline Protestant group in the country, at a conference last year. However, the Methodist pension board has barred investment in five Israeli banks, citing human rights concerns, and this week announced a new social values investment fund that will bar profits from the use of fossil fuels and evaluate holdings according to concerns expressed by church policy making bodies about Mideast peace, including Israeli treatment of Palestinians.

Editor observe that the AP story omitted mention of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA) and the United Methodists, while not specifically condemning Israel for war, have both encouraged movement for peace, as called for over and over again by Jesus Christ and His followers. And The Episcopal Church has long supported an active Peace Foundation that while not limited to Israel/Palestine war, appears to be strongly supported, as have similar movements among Traditional Catholic organizations.

As this Editor sees it, the largest exception to the Christian call for peace is from the 15.3 million member (but shrinking) [Southern Baptist Convention](#), which was [challenged by We Hold These Truths members](#) in June at the Phoenix Convention center. Sadly, many independent mega-Evangelical church leaders and owners still ignore or support ongoing wars in the Middle East, seemingly out of loyalty to Israel. We have come to label them "Neo-Christian" though many prefer to be called Christian Zionists. -CEC