

## RESOLUTION ON VISITS TO THE HOLY LAND

WHEREAS the Holy Land, vital to three of the world's major religions, Judaism, Christianity and Islam, is a rich and challenging place to visit, and

WHEREAS firsthand experience travelling in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories is vital to understanding the complexity of the current conflict for the people of Israel and Palestine, and

WHEREAS Bishop Munib Younan, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land, has invited ELCA members to come and visit stating: "We don't want you to come [only] as tourists. We invite you to come as pilgrims, to walk side by side with us, your sisters and brothers in Christ in the Holy Land," and

WHEREAS members of the La Crosse Area Synod are preparing to travel in October 2011 with Pastor Libby Howe and Bishop Bruce Burnside (WI South Central Synod), modeling a trip that includes both visits to the holy sites and meetings with today's Christians, Muslims and Jews living in Palestine and Israel, and

WHEREAS Pastor Elly McHan, a member of the La Crosse Area Synod, is currently serving as Bishop Younan's Communication Assistant, and

WHEREAS the ELCA has created excellent online resources<sup>1</sup> for developing a comprehensive and balanced trip, including sample itineraries and contact information for arranging visits with Lutheran Ministries, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED that pastors, congregations and members of the La Crosse Area Synod who plan trips to the Holy Land commit themselves to the ELCA's practice of accompaniment with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the synod's Middle East Subcommittee will make travel resources and information easily available on the synod's website and members of the committee will be available for consultation on travel options, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, as people of faith, this synod will remember to pray for all those who travel, that the Lord will be with them as they travel and also pray for the people of all faiths with whom they meet on their pilgrimage.

Submitted by the synod Middle East Subcommittee

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.elca.org/Our-Faith-In-Action/Justice/Peace-Not-Walls/Travel.aspx>