

IRAQ

Social Policy Resolution

CC02.11.65



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Adopted by the 2002 Church Council.

Whereas

Whereas, the U.S. and world leaders are debating the possibility of military action against Iraq in order to stop construction of weapons of mass destruction and counter the threat of terrorism; and

Whereas, in its 1995 social statement, "For Peace in God's World," the ELCA holds fast to the hope for a more peaceful and just world, calls on the church to live out its calling to proclaim the Gospel of peace (Ephesians 6:15), and commits us to pray and work for earthly peace; and

Whereas, the ELCA social statement "For Peace in God's World" provides principles for evaluating a variety of means to restrain those whose actions threaten international peace and security, including the use of military force; and

Whereas, the 1999 ELCA Churchwide Assembly affirmed support of the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Nonviolence for the Children of the World (2001–2010) and the World Council of Churches' Decade to Overcome Violence; and

Whereas, the Lutheran World Federation and the World Council of Churches have urged the international community, including their member churches, to seek a resolution of the present crisis concerning Iraq through nonmilitary means; therefore, be it

Resolved

Resolved, that the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:

1. Encourages all ELCA members, congregations, synods, agencies and institutions, and other entities of the ELCA to
 - a. Study the social statement, "For Peace in God's World";
 - b. Utilize the resource guide, "Talking Together as Christians about Tough Social Issues"; and
 - c. Consult other materials produced by our ecumenical partners, to foster moral deliberation about war with Iraq and deepen our understanding of peacemaking, the principles of "just/unjust war," and alternatives to war;
2. Affirms the public witness of Presiding Bishop Mark S. Hanson in support of peace;

3. Calls upon the Office of the Presiding Bishop in consultation with the units of this church to continue to consult with its international partners, particularly through the Lutheran World Federation and the World Council of Churches, as the ELCA develops its ongoing response to the crisis concerning Iraq;
4. Urges the Lutheran Office for Governmental Affairs and the Lutheran Office for World Community to continue their advocacy for peace and humanitarian efforts related to Iraq and encourages members of the ELCA to exercise their vocation as citizens in advocacy for peace; and
5. Invites all ELCA members, congregations, and synods to pray for peace, the work of the United Nations weapons inspectors, the people of Iraq, leaders of the United States, and members of the armed forces and their families.