

PRESS RELEASE

Minnesota Conference Votes to Implement Economic Action Toward a Just Peace in Palestine & Israel

June 12, 2017

The Minnesota Conference United Church of Christ voted overwhelmingly on June 10 to approve a resolution to implement economic action toward a just peace in Palestine and Israel. The vote was taken at the Conference's 55th Annual Meeting in St. Joseph, MN, where over 300 Conference members were in attendance.

The resolution approved read: "Be it resolved that the Minnesota Conference will regularly screen all current and future equities and future bonds for those companies named by the American Friends Service Committee, or other impartial high-quality source as determined by the Finance Committee on the advice of the Global Partnerships Team or the UCC's Global Ministries, as profiting from the industries of occupation and illegal settlement in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories; and will, to the best of its ability, divest from those companies and funds." The vote was taken on the 50th anniversary of the beginning of the Israeli military occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The resolution was co-sponsored by the Global Partnerships Team and Finance Committee of the Minnesota Conference UCC.

This resolution followed another vote taken by the Conference two years ago that called upon the Conference to enter into a time of study and deliberation on this issue and for the Global Partnership Team and Finance Committee to consult with one another about the possibility of divestment. Conference Minister Reverend Shari Prestemon, who recently led a Minnesota Conference delegation to Palestine and Israel, said: "I give thanks that our Conference has so thoughtfully considered this resolution and has made this bold decision for the cause of justice and peace in such a troubled region. We stand with our Christian, Muslim, and Jewish partners in Palestine and Israel who have long struggled for a new day of ultimate peace for all."

Reverend Emily Goldthwaite-Fries, chair of a sub-group of the Global Partnerships Team that has focuses on Palestine and Israel, commented, "Our vote was a proclamation of hope in the future of Palestine and Israel, and I am sure that those who opposed divestment also believe in that future."

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