A CALL FOR THE MINNESOTA CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST TO TAKE ACTIONS TOWARD A JUST PEACE IN THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT
Submitted by Minnesota Conference Global Partnerships Team on March 6, 2015.

Whereas the Global Partnerships Team of the Minnesota Conference has a particular mission “To receive and share the Good News of Jesus Christ by joining with global partners, Global Ministries, congregations of the Minnesota Conference, and Minnesota-based mission personnel to work for justice, reconciliation, and peace;” and

Whereas the United Church of Christ has a covenantal commitment to our Palestinian Christian partners, whose search for an alternative to violence born of hopelessness and despair has led them to author a document entitled Kairos Palestine 2009--’A Moment of Truth’: A Word of Faith, Hope, and Love from the Heart of Palestinian Suffering, as a call and summons to their global partners to engage in non-violent measures that will pressure Israel to end the Occupation; and

Whereas the MN Conference resolved in 2005 to enter into dialogue with interfaith groups in MN and to call upon on the Corporate Social Responsibility Ministry of the United Church of Christ to guide the Pension Board and the United Church Foundation to begin the process of using economic leverage to support the creation of an economically viable Palestinian state and to oppose the continued illegal Israeli occupation of the West Bank; and

Whereas in the decade since, the conflict has worsened and the cries of our Global Ministries partners have persisted, especially in the Kairos Palestine document; and

Whereas the Global Partnerships Team has seriously and prayerfully considered the resolution entitled “A Call for the United Church of Christ to Take Actions Toward a Just Peace in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict,” to be presented at the 30th General Synod of the United Church of Christ, proposing a strategy by the United Church of Christ to help end the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict, combining (1) educational empowerment (2) economic leverage (divestment from companies that profit from the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories and boycott of products produced in such territories by Israeli companies); (3) political pressure (petition to Congress to ensure that aid to Israel violates neither the U.S. Foreign Assistance Act nor the U.S. Arms Export Control Act); and (4) interreligious dialogue (conversation among the three Abrahamic faiths aimed at reaching religious reconciliation and achieving political resolution) and has voted to endorse passage of this resolution;

The 53rd Annual Meeting of the Minnesota Conference hereby RESOLVES

1) To endorse the passage of the resolution entitled “A Call for the United Church of Christ to Take Actions Toward a Just Peace in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict,” to be presented at the 30th General Synod of the United Church of Christ; and for the Minnesota Conference to consider at a future Annual Meeting of its members any action (such as divestment) proposed by an Israel-Palestine resolution passed at the 30th General Synod. At that meeting a proposal for action would be presented by a working group including members of the Finance Committee and the Global Partnership Team.

2) To call upon local congregations to engage in a 24-month period of intentional study of the Israeli occupation of Palestine and the movements for peace; to examine ways our churches can resist the structures that are inhibiting a just peace; and to build relationship with our
Global Ministries partners in the Holy Land, as well as interfaith and ecumenical partners in the U.S. and locally;

3) To commend Minnesota Conference leadership for continuing dialogue with Jewish and Muslim organizations, and call for Conference-wide participation in a dialogue among the three Abrahamic faiths at all levels—in particular between local congregations—in order to identify ways in which groups of congregations can work in concert to promote sacred reconciliation among all people who are affected by the conflict in the Middle East;

4) To direct the Minnesota Conference Minister to provide a report on the Conference’s progress in fulfilling the goals of this resolution at the end of the period of dedicated study, action, and relationship building;

5) To direct the Minnesota Conference Minister to distribute this resolution to Minnesota Conference delegates to the 2015 General Synod as a matter of information as they consider similar resolutions at Synod.

Funding
The funding for the implementation of this Resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the implementing body or bodies, and the funds available.

Implementation
The Board of Directors, in consultation with appropriate entities within the Minnesota Conference, will determine the implementing body or bodies.