

O Little Town of Bethlehem: Pilgrimage to the Holy Land

Whereas the issue of the conflict in the Holy Land has been repeatedly raised in General Conference resolutions (2016 United Methodist Book of Resolutions #6111, p. 602-606, United Methodist Resolution #6031), and

Whereas a Christian presence in the Holy Land is rapidly diminishing (<http://www.cbsnews.com/news/christians-of-the-holy-land/>), and

Whereas an understanding of the issue is critical to informed discussion among United Methodist laity and clergy, and

Whereas our United Methodist missionaries in the Holy Land consistently urge us to “come and see,” (<http://www.alexawad.org/details.php?ID=27>), and

Whereas our Palestinian Christian sisters and brothers plead with us to visit them, “the Living Stones” of Israel and Palestine, and

Whereas our Jewish and Muslim sisters and brothers likewise urge us to understand the issues, and,

Whereas the entire _____ Conference would benefit from and be blessed by learning about the conflict in the Holy Land from a representative who studied it as part of a pilgrim’s journey;

Therefore, be it resolved that the _____ Conference will send at least one conference member who is willing and able to travel on a fact-finding pilgrimage to the Holy Land before the next Annual Conference session, who will report on their trip in writing to the Bishop and the annual conference, and who will be available to speak about their trip to twenty church groups, and

Be it further resolved that from the appropriate budget, the _____ Conference will fund up to \$3,500 for this person’s air travel and the costs of a tour organization, and

Be it further resolved that the pilgrim will travel with a tour organizer such as Friends of Sabeel North America (FOSNA), Interfaith Peace Builders (IFPB), Society for Biblical Studies or another tour organizer that meets the guidelines for Holy Land Travel as specified in Resolution 6031, including spending at least one night in Bethlehem and being in contact with staff of the Methodist Liaison Office in Jerusalem, both before and during this trip.