



A Resolution to the Mennonite Church Canada Delegate Assembly July 2016: The Church and the Doctrine of Discovery

It is the recommendation, supported by the individuals, congregations and Area Churches below:

1. That Mennonite Church Canada repudiate the Doctrine of Discovery as it is fundamentally opposed to the gospel of Jesus Christ and our understanding of the inherent dignity and rights that individuals and peoples have received from God.
2. That a working group be formed by representatives of Mennonite Church Canada and Area Churches to begin by reviewing the church related recommendations from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report, make the appropriate study material available to congregations, and make further periodic recommendations to the General Board/Area Church Boards on steps along the path of reconciliation.

CARRIED

Note:

For preambles, background, and other information related to these resolutions, see the Discernment Guide at <http://home.mennonitechurch.ca/saskatoon2016>



A Resolution to the Mennonite Church Canada Delegate Assembly July 2016: Being a Faithful Church

AMMENDED

Based on what the Task Force has heard in our discernment process concerning same-sex committed relationships, and in the spirit of the church speaking again, the General Board has approved for consideration at the 2016 Delegate Assembly, the following BFC task force recommendation:

- One of our foundations of unity has been the *Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective*. We recommend that it continue to serve the church in the ways suggested in the Introduction of the Confession itself.
- We call upon our family of Christ to respectfully acknowledge that there are those among us (congregations and individuals) whose careful study of Scripture and prayerful journey of discernment lead them to a different understanding on committed same-sex relationships than is commonly **understood** by readings of Article 19 in our *Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective*.
- We recommend that we create space/leave room within our Body to test alternative understandings from that of the larger Body to see if they are a prophetic **nudging** of the Spirit of God.
- Since continued discernment will be required after Assembly 2016, we recommend that Mennonite Church Canada and Area Churches develop ways of to **hear one another around** the implementation of this recommendation.

CARRIED

Note:

For preambles, background, and other information related to these resolutions, see the Discernment Guide at <http://home.mennonitechurch.ca/saskatoon2016>



A Resolution to the Mennonite Church Canada Delegate Assembly July 2016: Future Directions Task Force

Resolution for Delegates:

Whereas the General Board has heard the robust conversation on the Future Directions Task Force Final Report prior to and at the five Area Church spring meetings, giving particular attention to concerns raised; and,

Whereas the General Board has reviewed and affirmed recommendations from the Task Force Addendum to the Final Report on ways to recognize and address core concerns raised on process, structure, national identity, international relations and witness, vulnerable area churches and finance;

In approving this motion, it is understood that:

- Prior to implementation there will be opportunity to vote on a more fully developed proposal no later than July 2018, with ongoing consultation with congregations in between;
- The final proposal will incorporate some form of area church delegate involvement in the governance of national agenda and priorities;
- The final proposal will include provision for national gatherings for study, fellowship, worship and discernment;
- Formal conversation will be undertaken (e.g. via working group, conference or other means) to review our future vision and strategy for international relationships and witness, addressing questions in the Addendum and related ones, to be completed by December, 2017
- The final proposal will include concrete provisions that recognize and respond to the vulnerability of smaller area churches; and
- Formal conversation will be undertaken (e.g. via working group, conference or other means) to build on the Report and engage congregations to: (a) dream about how to live out the gospel of Christ locally, across Canada and abroad; (b) think creatively on how congregations can resource our common life together in being the church; and, in the short term, (c) work together and generously support our mutual ministry and transition from where we are to where God invites us to;

The General Board moves:

That Mennonite Church Canada approve in principle the directions proposed by the Future Directions Task Force Final Report, and collaborate with the five Area Churches (British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Eastern Canada) in developing a more integrated nation-wide church body along the lines envisioned to better resource all levels of our church in responding to God's call to live out and share the peace of Jesus Christ with local through global neighbours.

Supplemental Resolution, if the above resolution is approved

That Mennonite Church Canada authorizes the General Board, in collaboration with Area Church boards, to proceed with transition planning along the lines outlined in the FDTF documents. Further, to provide latitude in re-envisioning program approaches in this interim period, parts of Mennonite Church Canada's General Bylaws be suspended (those referring to the Faith and Life Committee and Christian Witness, Christian Formation and Church Engagement Councils), with the understanding that during the transition period one or two individuals from each body will continue on the General Board to ensure representation of each ministry perspective.

Editor's note

The Supplemental Resolution above was subsequently withdrawn as the existing bylaws permit the General Board to make this decision without requiring a delegate vote. This was confirmed by the Parliamentarian.

CARRIED

Note:

For preambles, background, and other information related to these resolutions, see the Discernment Guide at <http://home.mennonitechurch.ca/saskatoon2016>



A Resolution to the Mennonite Church Canada Delegate Assembly July 2016: Resolution on Palestine and Israel

(bolded wording reflects amendments in the form of additional text made by the delegate body on July 9, 2016)

PREAMBLE

North American Mennonites have lived and studied, ministered and served in Palestine and Israel for nearly 70 years. Many partnerships have formed over these years, particularly through Mennonite Central Committee, our various denominational mission boards and Christian Peacemaker Teams. Thousands of Mennonites from Canada and the US have participated in learning tours and exchanges facilitated by Mennonite educational institutions, service and mission agencies, and tour operators. Most recently, Mennonite Church Canada has sent workers to serve at Bethlehem Bible College and Serve Nazareth.

This resolution emerges largely in response to the plea of Palestinian Christians that the global church come alongside the Palestinian people as they suffer under Israel's 49-year military occupation of their lands: the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza. Their concerns are expressed in the 2009 document entitled *A Moment of Truth: A Word of Faith, Hope and Love from the Heart of Palestinian Suffering*, issued by the churches of the region, through a cooperative effort known as Kairos Palestine.

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS:

- We are called to “follow Christ in the way of peace, doing justice, bringing reconciliation and practicing nonresistance” (Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective, article 22);
- We believe God calls us to speak truth to power, urging our governments, institutions, and businesses to take peaceful and nonviolent action against injustice where it occurs;
- We hear continued pleas from Palestinian Christians that Western Christians take notice of the suffering of all Palestinians under Israeli occupation; **we also recognize and lament the suffering of Israeli citizens.**
- We believe it is God's will that Israelis and Palestinians live with one another in peace, justice, freedom, and security;
- We lament Israel's ongoing and increasingly entrenched military occupation and settlement of Palestinian lands in contravention of international law, including its violations of Palestinians' rights to movement and self-determination;

- We hear Palestinian Christians urging us and fellow-believers around the world to exert economic pressure on Israel--through boycotts, divestment, and sanctions—as one of the few remaining options to end the occupation and facilitate a just peace with the Palestinian people;
- **We recognize the complexity of the conflict between the state of Israel and Palestine.**
- Even as we address the situation in Palestine and Israel, we confess our own complicity in the colonization and oppression of the Indigenous peoples of Canada, as well as our history of racist attitudes and behaviours toward **Jewish people** —

BE IT RESOLVED:

- We look to the gospel of Jesus Christ for guidance and grace in our responses to the Palestine and Israel context;
- We commit ourselves to ongoing prayer, searching, and discernment concerning the ways in which we as congregations, communities, and church members are impeding or facilitating, ignoring or promoting, the quest for a just peace between Palestinians and Israelis.
- We affirm the efforts of Israelis and Palestinians who are committed to non-violent ways of overcoming the injustice in their region; **we commit ourselves to working in partnership with them and with Canadian Jewish and Palestinian communities.**
- We urge our member congregations to deepen their understanding of the Palestine-Israel relationship through the study of educational materials on the topic and through participation in learning tours to the region;
- We ask the Mennonite Church Canada General Board, regional churches, congregations, and members to avoid investing in or supporting companies that do business with Israeli settlements and the Israel Defense Forces, and companies that are profiting from the occupation of the Palestinian territories; and
- We encourage the government of Canada to support measures that put pressure on Israel (including through economic sanctions) to end the occupation and work for a just peace, in accordance with international law.

CARRIED