

## General Convention of The Episcopal Church 2022 Archives' Research Report

**Resolution No.:** 2022-C012  
**Title:** Confronting Christian Zionism  
**Proposer:** Chicago  
**Topic:** Middle East

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**Directly Related:** (Attached)

None

**Indirectly Related:** (Available in the [Acts of Convention](#) database, searchable by resolution number)

2018-D018	Commit to a Negotiated Solution to Israeli-Palestinian Conflict
2015-B013	Reaffirm a Policy of Reconciliation and Restorative Justice in the Middle East
2015-C018	Affirm the Work of Christians in Israel and the Occupied Territories
2012-B019	Support Israeli-Palestinian Peace
1991-A147	Support a Two-state Solution for Israel and the Palestinian People
1991-D130	Affirm Commitment to Religious Liberty in Middle East
1988-D053	Affirm Goals of Justice, Peace and Reconciliation for Israelis and Palestinians
1982-B047	Call for Peace in the Middle East

*In preparing this report, the Archives researched the resolutions in the Acts of Convention database for the period 1973 through 2018, selecting “direct” resolutions that have a substantive bearing on the proposed legislation. The “direct” resolutions are attached and “indirect” resolutions are available in the Acts of Convention database. Committee members who require other research assistance should contact the Archives through the [Research Request Form](#) or call 800-525-9329.*

# C012 - Confronting Christian Zionism

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**Final Status:** Not Yet Finalized

**Proposed by:** Chicago

**Requests New Interim Body:** No

**Amends C&C or Rules of Order:** No

**Has Budget Implications:** No

**Cost:**

**HiA:** HB

**Legislative Committee Currently Assigned:** 07 - Social Justice & International Policy

**Completion Status:** Incomplete

**Latest House Action:** N/A

**Supporting Documents:** No

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## Resolution Text

*Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring,

That the 80th General Convention of the Episcopal Church reject the nationalistic theology of Christian Zionism which provides the ideological basis for Christian Zionist leaders and politicians seeking to influence United States policy in Palestine-Israel; and be it further

*Resolved*, that this Convention not only reject the theology of Christian Zionism which is inherently antisemitic but also, critically, condemn the political policy positions that it sponsors and financially supports, which include Israel's expansion across the entire land of Palestine Israel and the displacement of the Palestinian people, including our indigenous Palestinian Christian and Muslim brothers and sisters; and be it further

*Resolved*, that, recognizing the extent to which the Prayer Book liturgy including prayers and the lectionary as well as the hymns contain frequent references to the Biblical land of Israel and the Israelites and that many Episcopalians confuse these with the current State of Israel, a conflation that reinforces the deceptive theology of Christian Zionism, the Episcopal Church commit to making clear in liturgy and in teaching the clear distinction between the current political situation and the Biblical past.

## Explanation

The 2004 Diocese of Chicago Convention adopted the following resolution:

Resolved, that the 167th Convention of the Diocese of Chicago, in order to alert the baptized in the Diocese of the erroneous teachings of Christian Zionism, instructs the Peace

and Justice Commission to prepare and send to each congregation in the Diocese materials about these erroneous teachings and a Christian response to these teachings.

Christian Zionism is the belief, shared principally among evangelicals, that the establishment of the Israeli state and the "return" of the Jews to the Holy Land are biblically mandated steps necessary before the Second Coming of Christ can occur. Christian Zionist teachings arise from a literalist interpretation of Scripture that corrupts both God's promises in the Hebrew texts and the Gospel message of justice and love at the heart of our Baptismal Covenant. Christian Zionism also erases the voices of Palestinians.

Christian Zionism comes out of the dispensational theology which was developed in the 1830s by John Nelson Darby, an ex-priest of the Church of Ireland. According to Darby the return of the Jews to their ancient land will trigger the events of the Second Coming of Christ. Some clergy of the Church of England became captivated by dispensationalism. Lord Shaftesbury placed an advertisement in the *London Times* November 4, 1840 issue titled, "Restoration of the Jews," and coined the phrase, "A country without a nation for a nation without a country." Darby made seven trips to the United States and Canada between 1862 and 1878. William E. Blackstone, a Methodist who lived in Oak Park, Illinois was a committed dispensationalist premillennialist. Blackstone, who was convinced that the return of the Jews to their land would precede the coming of Christ to earth wrote *Jesus Is Coming*, a popular work that was translated into forty-two languages including Yiddish and Hebrew.

The creation of the British Mandate in 1922 was in part the work of dispensationalist leaders of the British government and of Jewish Zionists including Lord Arthur James Balfour and Chaim Weizmann. The establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 was welcomed by the evangelical world. These Christians viewed the birth of Israel as the fulfillment of Biblical prophecy and the first clear sign that the countdown to Armageddon had begun. The 1967 Six-Day War moved Billy Graham's father-in-law to write in the July 21, 1967 issue of *Christianity Today* "that for the first time in more than 2000 years Jerusalem is now completely in the hands of the Jews giving the student of the Bible a thrill and renewed faith in the accuracy and validity of the Bible." The Rev. John Hagee, a dispensationalist, is pastor of Cornerstone Church in San Antonio, Texas, a Pentecostal megachurch with 19,000 members. Hagee founded Christians United for Israel (CUFI) in 2006. CUFI with some eight million members today is a major player in the pro-Israel lobby in Washington, D.C. which works for unwavering support for the State of Israel in Congress. According to Rabbi Jessica Rosenberg of Jewish Voice of Peace Rabbinical Council, "CUFI claims to defend Israel in the name of supporting Jewish people. But in the theology of Christian Zionism, Jews are a means to an end, with the ultimate goal of Christian salvation. That is an inherently antisemitic theology because it reduces Jews to pawns."