

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

**Resolution No.:** 2022-C040  
**Title:** On Confronting Christian Zionism  
**Proposer:** Washington  
**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.*

# C040 - on Confronting Christian Zionism

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**Final Status:** Not Yet Finalized

**Proposed by:** Washington

**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 theology of Christian Zionism as a modern misinterpretation of scripture having no connection to the Creeds or the Prayer Book; and be it further

*Resolved*, that this Convention condemn the political policy positions promoted by such a theology.

## Explanation

The 127th Convention of the Diocese of Washington submit the following resolution to the 80th General Convention of The Episcopal Church.

Christian Zionism is the theological belief that the establishment of the modern Jewish State of Israel in 1948 is a biblically mandated precondition for the Second Coming of Christ.

It originates from a theology called dispensationalism, which was developed in the 1830s by John Nelson Darby, an ex-priest of the Church of Ireland. Through an excessively literalist reading of scripture, dispensationalism sections off the Bible into distinct, stand-alone periods (or dispensations) claiming that God has a different standard of dealings with humanity in each of these periods. The theological conclusion of dispensationalism is that God has a separate plan of salvation for the Jewish people than for the church. Also, according to Darby, the return of the Jewish people to their ancient land would trigger the events of the Second Coming of Christ.

Over the next few decades, dispensationalism grew in popularity both in England and the United States, and was the theological impetus for literalist Christians to support the creation of a Jewish homeland in Palestine (eventually referred to as Christian Zionism). With the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, Christian Zionism spread dramatically as many literalist Christians believed themselves to be witnessing the fulfillment of Biblical prophecy, and the first clear sign that the countdown to Armageddon had begun.

Today, this theologically flawed, literalist approach continues to support the belief that loving God must go hand-in-hand with blind support of the State of Israel without necessarily understanding the biblically unsound and very recent theological roots of Christian Zionism. In addition, it is crucial for the Episcopal Church to recognize that Christian Zionist teachings arise entirely from a Western colonial interpretation of the Bible, which corrupts God's promises in the Hebrew Scriptures, the Gospel message of justice and love, and the Baptismal Covenant. Christian Zionism is a harmful, nationalistic theology that erroneously views the Jewish people from a purely instrumental and distorted perspective of Christian eschatology. Furthermore, Christian Zionism has a very tangible negative impact on both the indigenous Palestinians, whom it sees as mere bystanders, if not obstacles to the fulfillment of God's providence, and to any attempts at a peace process since returning annexed land to the Palestinians threatens the necessary conditions for the fulfillment of prophecy. Thus, Christian Zionism has been used to support the State of Israel's continued annexation of the entire land of Palestine-Israel, and the displacement and oppression of the indigenous Palestinian people, including our Christian and Muslim brothers and sisters. Cathedral Canon John Peterson, cosponsor of this resolution, spent 12 years living in Jerusalem, as Dean of St. George's College. Canon Peterson reports, "I have witnessed first-hand the destructive impact that Christian Zionists have on the Church in Jerusalem, upon all Palestinians of whatever faith or no faith, and upon the prospects of peace in the long-suffering Holy Land."