

1 **2017 RESOLUTION #4 revised**
2 **RESPONDING TO ANTI-SEMITISM AND RECENT ACTS OF HATE**

3
4 **History**

5 *By action of the 2017 Annual Conference Session, this resolution was referred to the*
6 *Coordinating Council. At its September 30, 2017 meeting, the Council referred the*
7 *original resolution to the Mission and Justice team to have conversations with the maker*
8 *of the motion and see if there are amendments the team would like to offer. The revised*
9 *resolution is before you.*

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13 WHEREAS, anti-Semitism – targeting persons of Jewish faith and/or heritage for hatred,
14 violence, or mistreatment – has been called one of the oldest forms of group prejudice;
15 and

16
17 WHEREAS, any racism is a sin against the God in Whose image ALL people are lovingly
18 created (Genesis 1:26-27, Acts 17:26); and

19
20 WHEREAS, as members of the wider body of Christ, we mourn the sad history of Christian
21 mistreatment of Jewish people; and

22
23 WHEREAS, as United Methodists in the United States, we mourn the sad history and
24 ongoing problems of racism within both our nation and our denomination; and

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26 WHEREAS, we recognize the Jewish foundations of our Christian faith, the continuing
27 importance of the Hebrew Scriptures for our Church, and the Jewishness of our Lord and
28 Savior, Jesus Christ; and

29
30 WHEREAS, a February 2018 report from the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) noted “a trend
31 of rising anti-Semitic attacks and more subtle forms of discrimination across the European
32 continent” ([https://www.adl.org/news/op-ed/europes-anti-semitism-problem-needs-a-](https://www.adl.org/news/op-ed/europes-anti-semitism-problem-needs-a-reckoning)
33 [reckoning](https://www.adl.org/news/op-ed/europes-anti-semitism-problem-needs-a-reckoning)); and

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35 WHEREAS, another recent ADL report noted a 57 percent increase in documented anti-
36 Semitic incidents in the United States last year, “the highest tally that the Jewish civil rights
37 group has counted in more than two decades”
38 ([https://www.apnews.com/caf56960410f4422a8db19cb996365e9/Report:-Anti-Semitic-](https://www.apnews.com/caf56960410f4422a8db19cb996365e9/Report:-Anti-Semitic-incident-soar-by-57-percent-in-2017)
39 [incident-soar-by-57-percent-in-2017](https://www.apnews.com/caf56960410f4422a8db19cb996365e9/Report:-Anti-Semitic-incident-soar-by-57-percent-in-2017)); and

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41 WHEREAS, in the United States, Jewish people are no more than about two percent of the
42 overall population (<http://ajpp.brandeis.edu/>), but the official hate crime statistics of the

1 Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) for recent years, including 2016 (the last year on
2 record), has consistently found them to make up of the majority of all victims of hate
3 crimes based on religious bias (<https://ucr.fbi.gov/ucr-publications#Hate>); and

4
5 WHEREAS, the FBI's 2016 annual hate crime statistics, released in November 2017, found
6 that reported hate crimes in 2016 in America rose for the second year in a row, with half of
7 hate crimes driven by racial/ethnic bias targeting African Americans
8 ([https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-hatecrime-fbi/u-s-hate-crimes-rise-for-second-
9 straight-year-fbi-idUSKBN1DD2BA](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-hatecrime-fbi/u-s-hate-crimes-rise-for-second-straight-year-fbi-idUSKBN1DD2BA)); and

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11 WHEREAS, within Indiana, we have seen such incidents within the past two years as Ku
12 Klux Klan flyers distributed around Monument Circle in Indianapolis on the first day of
13 Black History Month in 2018 ([https://www.indystar.com/story/news/2018/02/02/white-
14 pride-flyers-found-monument-circle/1087731001/](https://www.indystar.com/story/news/2018/02/02/white-pride-flyers-found-monument-circle/1087731001/)), as well as two separate bomb threats
15 against the Jewish Community Center in Indianapolis
16 ([http://fox59.com/2017/03/12/another-bomb-threat-targets-indy-jewish-community-
17 center/](http://fox59.com/2017/03/12/another-bomb-threat-targets-indy-jewish-community-center/)) and a bullet being fired into the classroom of a synagogue, Adath B'Nai Israel
18 Temple in Evansville ([http://jewishjournal.com/news/nation/215840/gunshot-fired-
19 classroom-window-indiana-synagogue/](http://jewishjournal.com/news/nation/215840/gunshot-fired-classroom-window-indiana-synagogue/)); and

20
21 WHEREAS, it would be irresponsible to either call all criticisms of the fallible Israeli
22 government anti-Semitic (as all human governments need prophetic challenge at times) or
23 to ignore anti-Semitism when it appears in criticism of the world's only Jewish state; and

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25 WHEREAS, we have valued, faithful members with diverse views on such political issues as
26 the 2016 U.S. Presidential election and the Arab-Israeli conflict, but we can all unite in
27 condemning such intolerant hatred; and

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29 WHEREAS, we see no conflict between our holding firmly to the truths of our Christian
30 faith and wanting our Jewish, Muslim, atheist, or other neighbors who may believe
31 differently, as well as fellow Christians, to be treated as we ourselves would want to be
32 treated (Matthew 7:12); and

33
34 WHEREAS, our Bishop Julius Trimble has a record of commendably speaking out against
35 racism and anti-Semitism;

36
37 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that as the Indiana Annual Conference of The United
38 Methodist Church we express our deep sadness over recent expressions of racism and
39 anti-Semitism; and

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41 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we declare our strong, unwavering belief that ALL people—
42 women no less than men, and individuals of any age, ethnicity, background, or culture no

1 less than those of any other—are equally created in the image of God and entitled to have
2 their God-given dignity respected; and

3
4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we stand together today to affirm our strong commitment
5 to the statements in our United Methodist Social Principles that “We deplore acts of hate
6 or violence against groups or persons based on race, color, national origin, ethnicity, age,
7 gender, disability, status, economic condition, sexual orientation, gender identity, or
8 religious affiliation” (2016 *Discipline* ¶162) and that “we recognize racism as sin and affirm
9 the ultimate and temporal worth of all persons” (¶162.A); and

10
11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we declare our commitment to the principle that our
12 neighbors in our local communities of any faith or no faith should be free to lawfully
13 follow their beliefs in peace and mutual respect with their neighbors, without facing
14 threats, violence, or coercion from others; and

15
16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, for the sake of offering guidance to prevent discussions of the
17 Arab-Israeli conflict from being tainted with any hint of anti-Semitism, we urge avoidance
18 of the following:

- 19 • Echoing historic anti-Semitic rhetoric, stereotypes, or conspiracy theories in
20 criticisms of Israelis; or
- 21 • Singling out Israel, the world’s lone Jewish state, for condemnation, isolation, or
22 punishment, according to a harsher standard of judgment than is used with the
23 Palestinian leadership, Israel’s neighbors, or other nations; or
- 24 • Dismissal of concerns about threats and violence against either Israelis or
25 Palestinians; or
- 26 • Any sort of broad, collective blaming of all Jews, all Israelis, all Palestinians, or all
27 Muslims.

28
29 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we encourage United Methodists within our annual
30 conference to discuss this resolution with others in their congregations, to educate
31 themselves about racism and anti-Semitism, to find opportunities to express their
32 solidarity with victims of racism or anti-Semitism, to pray and work for a more just and
33 welcoming society; and

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35 FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED, that we direct our conference secretary to arrange, within the
36 next 30 days, to have this resolution posted on the Indiana Conference website and shared
37 with the Jewish Community Center in Indianapolis, Adath B’Nai Israel Temple in Evansville,
38 the Indianapolis Jewish Community Relations Council, the Conference of Presidents of
39 Major American Jewish Organizations, the President and General Secretary of the United
40 Methodist General Board of Church and Society, the President and General Secretary of
41 the United Methodist General Board of Global Ministries, the President and General
42 Secretary of the United Methodist Commission on Religion and Race, the President and

- 1 Ecumenical Officer of the United Methodist Council of Bishops, as well as any other
- 2 organization or leader deemed appropriate.
- 3
- 4 John Lomperis
- 5 Lay Equalization Member from North District