

CENTRAL AMERICA

Social Policy Resolution

CA89.04.21



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Adopted by the 1989 Churchwide Assembly.

Whereas

Whereas, the nations of Central America continue to suffer from the plagues of war, poverty, hunger and oppression; and

Whereas, the church is called and sent to bear witness to God's creative, redeeming and sanctifying activity in the world; and

Whereas, the ways in which this church does this include "advocating dignity and justice for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among nations and standing with the poor and powerless and committing itself to their needs" (ELCA 4.02.c); and

Whereas, the predecessor church bodies repeatedly spoke out on behalf of freedom, economic justice, self-determination, and resolution of conflicts in Central America through non-military means; and

Whereas, our brother, Bishop Mercado Gómez, and the Lutheran Church of El Salvadore [Sínodo Luterano Salvadoreño] is in the forefront of the struggle for peace with justice in Central America; therefore, be it

Resolved

RESOLVED, that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:

1. Press for an end to United States military aid and for the cessation of all destabilizing military involvement in the region by countries outside the region;
2. Support negotiation among the various parties to the Central American conflict within the context of the Arias peace plan or similar subsequent peace efforts of the governments of the countries in the region;
3. Support appropriate relief and development aid to help the people of all the Central American nations overcome the miseries of poverty;
4. Encourage the normalization of relations between the United States and all nations of Central America, including the lifting of the economic embargo against Nicaragua;

5. Condemn all human-rights abuses, whether by governments, revolutionary movements, or death squads, and advocate on behalf of the victims with appropriate authorities in the United States and abroad;
6. Call upon the governments in the region to allow relief workers access to all parts of the countries concerned to carry out their efforts on the basis of internationally-recognized humanitarian principles;
7. Work to inform its members about the situation in Central America as it develops and about the issues under debate, encouraging them to participate in study seminars to Central America;
8. Express support to congregations that are offering various forms of aid to refugees fleeing from Central America;
9. Encourage its members to pray for peace with justice in all the countries of Central America and to become active advocates for peace in that troubled region;
10. Request the Bishop of this church to convey this resolution to Bishop Mercado Gómez and the Lutheran Church of El Salvador [Sínodo Luterano Salvadoreño] and assure them of our solidarity with them in their struggle; and
11. Request the bishop of this church to convey the substance of this resolution to all representatives in the United States Congress, as well as copies to the presidents of both El Salvador and the United States, and the United States ambassador to El Salvador.