

Report of the Resolutions Committee to the Convention

submitted by the Rev. Jedediah Fox, chair

Members.of.the.Committee: The Rev. Rilla Barrett; the Rev. Jedediah Fox, Church of the Redeemer, Kenmore; Micah Kurtz, St. Columba's, Kent; Mary Maxon, St. Luke's, Vancouver.

To.reach.the.Resolutions.Committee?email;resolutions@ecwwj.org

Mo matter how many years I have participated in conventions of the church, every time I hear the word resolution, I think of New Year, and the resolutions that are made, directing our life forward into another year. Maybe that is not as off the mark as it seems on the surface. The Resolution process plays much the same role in our common life as a diocese. We just get a jump start by making our resolutions in October. The process is imperfect, much like those New Years resolutions often are, is imperfect, but it gives us the scaffolding to do better, to help build our little outpost of Kingdom that God is raising in Western Washington.

I remain very grateful for the work of everyone who has submitted a resolution, and of my fellow members of the Resolution committee and all the work that they do to help in this process.

- The Rev. Jedediah Fox, chair

Actions.of.the.Committee;On October 9th the committee met to review the three resolutions which were submitted by the 45 day canonical deadline of September 12th. Below are the committee's recommendations, as well as the full text of the resolution, including any explanation.

Recommendations from the Resolutions Committee

Resolution.-7: The Committee recommends Do Pass on Resolution #1 entitled 2026 Diocesan Assessment Rate, submitted by the Diocesan Council.

Resolution.-8: The Committee recommends Do Pass on Resolution #2 entitled Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) to Salary Scale for 2025, submitted by the Personnel Committee of the Diocese of Olympia.

Resolution.-9: The Committee Takes No Position on Resolution #3 entitled A Call to the Church for Action Toward Ceasefire and a Just Peace in Israel and Palestine, submitted by The Bishop's Committee for Justice and Peace in the Holy Land

Resolution #1 – 2026 Diocesan Assessment Rate

Resolved, that this 114th Convention of the Diocese of Olympia approve the 2026 diocesan assessment rate factor be set at 14.5% of the Net Disposable Income (NDI).

Explanation;

In accordance with Canon 7, Diocesan Convention determines the assessment rate for the second year of assessment following determination; thus, the 2024 Convention sets the 2026 assessment rate. Over the last 20 years, the rate has been steadily reduced to its current rate of 14.5%. From 2004-2006, the rate was 20%. From 2007-2011, the rate was reduced to 18%. In 2012, the rate was 17.5%. From 2013-2015, the rate was 17%. In 2016, the rate was 16%. In 2017 and 2018, the assessment rate was 15%. Since 2019, the rate has been steady at 14.5%.

This recommendation is based on the following factors. First, congregations throughout the diocese continue to contribute their assessments in a timely manner, and with rare exception, congregations pay their assessment balances in full. In addition, diocesan staff continue to be good stewards of the resources entrusted to them by carefully managing expenses of programs that support the vision of the diocese. Finally, 2025 will be the first full year of ministry with a new bishop diocesan. Holding the assessment rate of 14.5% for 2026 will give the new bishop time to live into the vision discerned by the diocesan governing bodies several years ago. It will also give the new bishop, the governing bodies, and staff time to discern whether updates are needed to the vision or to the funding models of the diocese. If changes to the current assessment model or rates are needed, we believe the earliest those should be considered would be for fiscal year 2027. The assessment rate for 2027 will be proposed to Convention in 2025. That recommendation also assumes there are no unanticipated material changes in revenues or expenses in 2025 or 2026.

In addition to income from assessments, the diocese relies on capital gains and use of net assets fund operations. Use of capital gains and net assets to balance the budget is governed by the Board of Directors in accordance with a long-standing expenditure policy for endowments. This policy is designed to preserve underlying investment balances while also giving the diocese flexibility to use a portion of those investments to carry out the ministry and mission of the diocese. If actual assessments and other revenue equal or exceed budget and if actual expenses come in under budget, then the use of capital gains and net assets is minimal in a given year. If actual revenue is under budget or expenses exceed budget, larger draws from capital gains and net assets will be necessary.

Resolution #2 - Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) to Salary Scale for 2025

Resolved, That this 114th Convention of the Diocese of Olympia set the Cost of Living Adjustment for 2025 parochial clergy salary scale and Office of the Bishop staff salary scale at 3.8%.

Explanation

As required by Canon 23, sections 2 and 5, the Personnel Commission, in August 2024, proposes the Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for 2024 for the Parochial Clergy Salary Scale and the salary scale for Office of the Bishop staff. The Personnel Commission uses the year-over-year change to the Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index (CPI) for the Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue area to determine the COLA. For June 2023 to June 2024 the CPI reported an increase in the cost of living of 3.8%. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) measures the average change in prices over time in a fixed market basket of goods and services. The CPI is based on prices of food, clothing, shelter, and fuels, transportation fares, charges for doctors' and dentists' services, drugs, and the other goods and services that people buy for day-to-day living. The Seattle- Tacoma- Bellevue metropolitan area comprises King, Pierce, and Snohomish Counties. The diocese represents a diverse economic reality, including three major metropolitan areas as well as rural communities. As we examine the Church's role in creating economic justice for all people, we lead by modeling just wages for those employed by the Church. Wages that take into consideration the higher cost of living in this region are working toward economic justice, something that our Diocese of Olympia has supported since the implementation of the clergy salary scale in 1974. The continuing work of the Commission includes restructuring the clergy pay scale to reflect the geo-economic diversity of the diocese. See the Commission report for more information on our on-going work. The proposed COLA raises the wage for clergy and Bishop's staff who are being paid at the minimum rate for their position. The scale increase enacted by the proposed COLA will enable faith communities in our diocese to continue to call the leaders we need in this time that requires vision and agility. For information purposes, the Personnel Commission offers the parochial clergy salary scale (for full-time positions) adjusted for the proposed COLA. The adjusted scale was calculated by applying the proposed COLA to the mid-point of each grade; the minimum is 80% of the mid-point, the maximum is 120% of the mid-point. Hourly rates for annualized salaries are also provided. Also, grades have been flipped, with Grade E now the first line in the charts, reflecting that the largest number of our parochial clergy are paid in Grade E and Grade D.

Proposed 2025 Parochial Clergy Salary Scale

Annualized Salaries

Grade	minimum	mid-point	maximum
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E	\$80,611	\$100,765	\$120,919
D	\$88,564	\$110,705	\$132,845
C	\$97,404	\$121,754	\$146,105
B	\$107,164	\$133,955	\$160,746
A	\$117,883	\$147,353	\$176,825

Hourly rates for annualized salaries

Grade	minimum	mid-point	maximum
E	\$38.76	\$48.44	\$58.14
D	\$42.56	\$53.23	\$63.87
C	\$46.82	\$58.53	\$70.24
B	\$51.53	\$64.40	\$77.28
A	\$56.67	\$70.84	\$85.01

Mandatory Policies (applies to rectors and vicars):

1. If church-owned housing is provided, contact the Canon to the Ordinary for information on calculating the value of housing and utilities (for tax and pension purposes) and adjusting cash compensation.
2. Clergy must be paid at least the minimum of the applicable range.
3. Clergy with five (5) or more years of ordained service must be paid at least 90% of the mid-point of their congregation's applicable grade. [See advisory note below.]
4. Clergy with ten (10) or more years of ordained service must be paid at least 100% of the mid-point of their congregation's applicable grade. [See advisory note below.]
5. Exceptions to these policies require the approval of the Bishop.
6. All financial agreements with clergy must be rewritten or amended in their Mutual Ministry Agreement to reflect changes in compensation or provisions and a copy forwarded to the Bishop by January 31 of each year.

Advisory Policies:

1. For additional paid clergy (associate, assistant), it is recommended that minimum compensation be established at two salary grades below that established for the parish or mission, depending upon qualifications and experience.
2. A clergy person with less than five (5) years of ordained service should receive pay increases greater than the cost-of-living adjustment so the salary reaches the 90% of mid-point by the fifth year.

3. A clergy person approaching (10) years of ordained service should receive pay increases greater than the cost- of-living adjustment so the salary reaches the 100% of mid-point by the tenth year.
4. If a congregation is moving toward a higher grade, that congregation would be wise to increase toward that new salary grade incrementally.
5. Parishes and missions are encouraged to consider clergy experience and performance when deliberating compensation increases in excess of the COLA.
6. For interim clergy of a parish or mission, it is recommended that compensation be at the grade level of the parish or mission, with consideration for any specialized interim training.
7. Parishes, missions, and affiliated ministries are encouraged to consider providing a COLA adjustment to lay staff in parity with clergy.

Resolution #3 - A Call to the Church for Action Toward Ceasefire and a Just Peace in Israel and Palestine

Resolved, that this 114th Convention of the Diocese of Olympia reaffirms our commitment to peace built on the just and sustainable foundation of equal rights, self-determination and dignity for all; and be it further

Resolved, that the Diocese of Olympia affirms the understanding that no lasting peace or security can be achieved in the Holy Land until Israel's military occupation and control over Palestinians end and Palestinians and Israelis have equal rights, freedom, and self-determination; and be it further

Resolved, that the Diocese of Olympia recognizes and endorses the legal conclusions of Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, B'Tselem and others finding that Israel is an apartheid state imposing insufferable social, political and economic conditions on the Palestinian people, and recognizes and endorses the legal conclusions of the International Court of Justice and others that Israel's military occupation and settlements are illegal under international law; and be it further

Resolved, that the Diocese of Olympia condemns Israel's decades-long military occupation and civil control of Palestinians; condemns the terrifying Hamas attack on Israel on October 7, 2023; condemns the ensuing ongoing military aggression by Israel against Palestinian civilians and aid workers in Gaza; and condemns the escalating military and settler attacks on Palestinians across the Occupied Palestinian Territories; and be it further

Resolved, that the Diocese of Olympia stands in vehement opposition to the atrocities being perpetrated by the Israeli government against civilians in Gaza including military attacks, destruction of civilian infrastructure, forced resettlement, and the withholding of food, water, medical care and other necessities of life; and be it further

Resolved, that the Diocese of Olympia recognizes the role of the United States in both funding the aggression against Palestinians and in vetoing efforts by the international community to hold Israel accountable to international humanitarian law; and be it further

Resolved, that the Diocese of Olympia urges advocacy using our collective voice as a Diocese, our common voice as churches and our individual voices as children of God in support of:

- an immediate ceasefire,
- cessation of U.S. aid to Israel until a ceasefire is established,
- significant and adequate humanitarian aid for the people of Gaza,

- conditioning future U.S. aid to Israel on compliance with U.S. laws prohibiting military assistance to countries that violate human rights (the Leahy Laws),
- an end to Israel's confiscation of Palestinian land,
- an end to Israel's control over Gaza and its military occupation of the West Bank including East Jerusalem,
- a long-term political solution based on equal rights;

using such methods as speaking out to elected officials, peaceful protest, education, and participation in the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement; and be it further,

Resolved, that as the people and the congregations of the Diocese of Olympia advocate for peace, we send love, prayers and any assistance we can to our siblings in the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem and all there who suffer.

Explanation

Statements of Belief:

- All lives are precious and violence against them is a travesty, regardless of the identity of perpetrator or victim.
- Criticism of the State of Israel is not inherently antisemitic, and nothing in this resolution should in any way be misconstrued as derogatory toward Jewish people or the Jewish faith.
- Criticism of actions by the State of Israel is not relevant to Israel's right to exist and nothing in this resolution should be misconstrued to suggest Israel should cease to exist.
- Hamas is not the same as the Palestinian people. Its military wing, responsible for the Oct. 7 attack, is not representative of Palestinians.
- Our faith explicitly demands we act against injustice.

Palestinian Life Prior to October 7, 2023.

The State of Israel was formed in 1948 with more than 700,000 Palestinians expelled or forced to flee from their homes, beginning a pattern of unequal rights that exists through today. Palestinians living within Israel and in the Occupied West Bank, East Jerusalem and in Gaza are subject to different laws, policies and practices than their Israeli Jewish

counterparts, resulting in a discriminatory form of systemic subjugation that severely limits the freedom, health, welfare and lives of nearly 7,000,000 Palestinians. 1

For over 55 years, the Israeli government has assigned different sets of rights to two peoples -- one set inordinately superior to the other, one people free and the other severely restricted, one people's rights determined by the other, one people holding power and the other subjugated under it. Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and the Israeli human rights organization B'Tselem have all conducted extensive research and issued detailed reports concluding that Israel's treatment of Palestinians amounts to apartheid.2

Since the Israeli military occupation of the West Bank and Gaza in 1967, the government of Israel has continued to destroy Palestinian homes and sanction the confiscation of Palestinian land for the establishment of Jewish-only settlements in the West Bank. The International Court of Justice has determined that Israel's longstanding military occupation and its settlements are illegal under international law.3

Over the years, Palestinians have been increasingly deprived of self-determination, equal rights, natural resources, freedom of movement, peaceful dissent, and economic and educational opportunity. Palestinians in the West Bank are subject to roadblocks, checkpoints, inspections, middle-of-the-night arrests of children in their homes and daily degradations at the hands of armed Israeli forces. Palestinians in the West Bank live under an Israeli military legal system that provides significantly fewer rights and protections than the civilian legal system governing Jewish Israelis living in the same area. This is particularly harmful to Palestinian children. Routinely children are incarcerated without charges being filed, subjected to solitary confinement and harsh interrogations, transferred across borders in contravention of international law and convicted at a rate of approximately 95%.4

Palestinians living within Israel are subject to discriminatory laws that govern land access, planning and zoning, with unequal allocation of state resources. Segregated K-12 Jewish

¹ <https://www.hrw.org/report/2021/04/27/threshold-crossed/israeli-authorities-and-crimes-apartheid-and-persecution>

https://www.btselem.org/publications/fulltext/202101_this_is_apartheid

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/campaigns/2022/02/israels-system-of-apartheid>

These three publications document much of the information in this Explanation and are recommended for general study.

² Ibid.

³ <https://www.nytimes.com/live/2024/07/19/world/israel-gaza-war-hamas?smid=url-share#icj-israel-palestinian-territories-occupation>

⁴ https://www.dci-palestine.org/military_detention

and Arab public schools receive unequal subsidies. Palestinian citizens of Israel face discrimination in all areas of educational, employment and economic opportunity.

Palestinians living in Gaza have been under blockade since 2007, preventing the free movement of people, medical supplies and goods across the border. Even before October 7, 2023, Gazans faced endemic poverty, unemployment, physical and mental health deterioration and extreme hardship. Basic necessities including food, safe drinking water, electricity, fuel, sewage disposal and medical care were in insufficient supply. 90-97% of the water was unsafe for human consumption and required filtration for which equipment was frequently unavailable.⁵

In 2018 Israel passed the Nation-State law, declaring Israel a nation-state of the Jewish people and stating that the right to exercise national self-determination belongs solely to the Jewish people. The law declares Jewish settlements on Palestinian land a national value and promotes their growth.⁶

Statement of Principle

The subjugation of one people by another is inherently unjust and unstable. No lasting peace can be achieved nor justice established until Israel's military occupation and control over Palestinians ends and Palestinians and Israelis have equal rights, freedom and self-determination. Until equality is established, a cycle of violence is inevitable and security impossible.

October 7, 2023, and Since

On October 7, 2023, Hamas committed a horrifying attack on Israeli civilians, killing approximately 1200 people and taking approximately 250 hostages.

In response, Israel began one of the deadliest and most destructive military campaigns in recent history, targeting Gazan civilian society. As of August, 2024, more than 40,000 Gazans have died, a number that does not include thousands suspected killed and missing under the rubble or those killed by disease and other war-related causes, now including polio and starvation. The killing has been widespread and indiscriminate. At least 289 humanitarian aid workers and over 100 journalists have been killed in Gaza. Approximately two thirds of those killed are women and children.⁷

⁵ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/oct/25/un-report-80-per-cent-of-gaza-inhabitants-relied-on-international-aid-before-war>

⁶ <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/7/8/israeli-supreme-court-upholds-contentious-jewish-state-law>

⁷ <https://www.unrwa.org/newsroom/official-statements/remarks-unrwa-chief-staff-mr-ben-majekodunmi-world-humanitarian-day>

Israel's extensive bombing has left the built environment and infrastructure systems largely destroyed. Most of Gaza's hospitals, schools and civil society are unable to function.⁸ Nine out of ten Gazans have been driven from their homes, with many forced to move multiple times.⁹ In the midst of these conditions, Israel has blocked aid to Gazans.¹⁰

Gazans are living with inadequate or nonexistent food, water, shelter, sanitation, and medical care, creating unbearable conditions of suffering, starvation, disease and death.¹¹ According to the UN Secretary General, "Gaza is in a humanitarian freefall."¹²

A growing number of legal scholars consider Israel's actions to constitute genocide.¹³

UjSj.Support.of.Israel

Prior to October 7, 2023, the United States was committed to providing Israel approximately \$3.8 billion each year in military assistance. Since October, extraordinary additional U.S. aid has been provided, including \$8.7 billion in April and a \$20 billion weapons package approved in August. Between October and late August, the United States had flown 500 flights and sent over 100 sea shipments to Israel, carrying more than 50,000 tons of bombs, rockets, small arms, munitions and other equipment to the Israeli military.¹⁴

The U.S. has also regularly vetoed actions in the United Nations that are supportive of Palestinians, including calls for a ceasefire.¹⁵

U.S. Leahy Laws prohibit the provision of U.S. aid to countries that don't meet human rights standards. Although aid to other countries has been withheld for human rights abuses,

<https://www.unrwa.org/newsroom/official-statements/very-grim-milestone-world%E2%80%99s-watch>

<https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/gaza-death-toll-how-many-palestinians-has-israels-campaign-killed-2024-07-25/>

⁸ <https://www.npr.org/2024/06/01/g-s1-1780/gaza-israel-infrastructure-water-schools-hospitals#:~:text=A%20joint%20report%20by%20the,infrastructure%20amounted%20to%20%2418.5%20billion.>

⁹ <https://www.unfpa.org/occupied-palestinian-territory>

¹⁰ <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/02/israel-defying-icj-ruling-to-prevent-genocide-by-failing-to-allow-adequate-humanitarian-aid-to-reach-gaza/>

¹¹ <https://www.rescue.org/article/crisis-gaza-what-you-need-know>

¹² <https://www.unrwa.org/newsroom/official-statements/gaza-humanitarian-freefall-secretary-general>

¹³ <https://www.bu.edu/articles/2024/is-israel-committing-genocide-in-gaza/>

¹⁴ <https://www.cfr.org/article/us-aid-israel-four-charts>

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/israel-hamas/2024/08/26/israeli-war-hamas-gaza-updates/74950163007/>

¹⁵ <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/what-military-support-does-us-provide-israel-2024-04-08/>

these standards are not generally applied to Israel, nor is the aid process transparent enough to be adequately monitored.¹⁶

Statement of Faith

As Episcopalians, we are compelled by our faith to stand up to injustice, to be peacemakers and to help the oppressed. Our Baptismal Covenant calls on us to “strive for justice and peace among all people and respect the dignity of every human being.” We recognize that Israel’s ongoing military occupation and its relentless assaults that have resulted in the utter devastation of all semblance of civil society in Gaza are antithetical to the Gospel message, and that silence in light of them contravenes the pledge of our Baptismal Covenant.

Recognizing this overwhelming human suffering as a faith issue, a growing number of mainstream American Christian churches and denominations have issued statements condemning Israel’s actions and calling for advocacy to pressure Israel to release its hold of Palestinian rights.¹⁷

Kairos Palestine and Global Kairos for Justice (a worldwide ecumenical Christian coalition) write in Cry for Hope, “The very being of the church, the integrity of the Christian faith, and the credibility of the Gospel is at stake We cannot serve God while remaining silent about the oppression of the Palestinians.”¹⁸ In recent months, Kairos Palestine has been emphatic in its call for a Christian response to the suffering in Gaza.¹⁹

The 81st General Convention of the Episcopal Church passed a number of relevant resolutions in June of 2024 that need support and action at the Diocesan and parish levels including:

A110 - Clarify Distinction Between Biblical and Modern Israel

C002 - On Responsible Travel to the Holy Land

D006 - Rejecting Theology and Politics of Christian Zionism

D007 - Peace Through Equal Rights in Israel/Palestine

¹⁶ <https://carnegieendowment.org/research/2021/05/bringing-assistance-to-israel-in-line-with-rights-and-us-laws?lang=en>
<https://www.propublica.org/article/israel-gaza-blinken-leahy-sanctions-human-rights-violations>

¹⁷ <https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/06/07/american-churches-launch-initiative-end-israels-apartheid>
<https://cmep.org/about-2/partners/>

¹⁸ <https://cryforhope.org>

¹⁹ [https://www.kairospalestine.ps/images/A Call for Repentance An Open Letter from Palestinian Christians 1.pdf](https://www.kairospalestine.ps/images/A%20Call%20for%20Repentance%20An%20Open%20Letter%20from%20Palestinian%20Christians%201.pdf)

D009 - Swords into Plowshares: US Accountability and Responsibility in Rebuilding Gaza

D012 - Conditioning Military Assistance to Israel on Human Rights and a Negotiated Peace

D013 - Affirmation of the Palestinian State

D056 - Calling for a Ceasefire in Gaza

D075 - The Immediate Release of Ms. Layan Nasir, 24, from Administrative Detention in Israel.