

June 26, 2014

Presbyterian Resolution is Offense to Israel and Blow to Our Community

We were deeply disheartened and saddened to learn that the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church voted to divest from three American companies that do business with Israel. The biased resolution, which passed by an extremely narrow margin in the General Assembly, is an offense to Israel and a blow to our community; the choice to divest from Israel comes at the expense of investing in peace and in the Church's longstanding relationship with the mainstream American Jewish community.

Despite this decades-long relationship, and despite entreaties from over 1,700 Jewish religious leaders from all 50 states, the Church's General Assembly rejected reason and instead empowered extremists. This will only hinder prospects for peace and a two-state solution.

We know that this vote is far from representative of the broader Presbyterian community, and have been so gratified by the outpouring of support we have received from our Presbyterian friends here in the Bay Area. Reverend Doug Huneke, Pastor Emeritus of Westminster Presbyterian Church in Tiburon, and Reverend Paul Watermulder, Senior Pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Burlingame, who attended the General Assembly, are two such friends.

Their joint op-ed, published this week both in the J Weekly and in a Presbyterian blog, is truly reflective of the values we share and the relationship our communities have worked so hard to establish. They call on "every Presbyterian clergyperson and local church board to reach out to neighboring synagogues and rabbis to try to explain this hurtful vote and attempt to build back the bridges it destroyed." We hope that their moderate voice will empower other Presbyterian clergy to come forward in support of Israel, our community and our everlasting commitment to peace.

[Click here to read the full op-ed.](#)