

*Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect
the dignity of every human being?*



PIN Bulletin for Local Organizers

Volume 6, December 2019



The Episcopal Peace Fellowship's Palestine Israel Network (EPF PIN) is working for justice and peace and an end of the occupation in the homeland of Palestinians and the birthplace of Jesus.

Will you join us in continuing this ministry through your prayers, actions and financial support this Advent & Christmas season?

Please mail gifts to EPF PIN, PO Box 15, Claysburg, PA 16625,
with ADVENT in the memo line.

Or Give online at <https://give.classy.org/epfpinadvent>

Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem



Exploring PIN's Palestine Israel Toolkit : The Basics

Among the most basic resources for EPF-PIN is the [2009 Kairos Document](#), a call from Palestinian Christians to the world from a hopeless situation ... a cry for positive action to end injustice and the very real threat to survival of Christians in the Holy Land. The formation of EPF-PIN was our answer to

this call.

On November 29, 2019, over 350 people - women and men, young and old, lay and clergy, Palestinians and friends from all over the world - gathered in Bethlehem, the birthplace of Jesus, for the *Tenth Anniversary of Kairos Palestine: A Moment of Truth.*

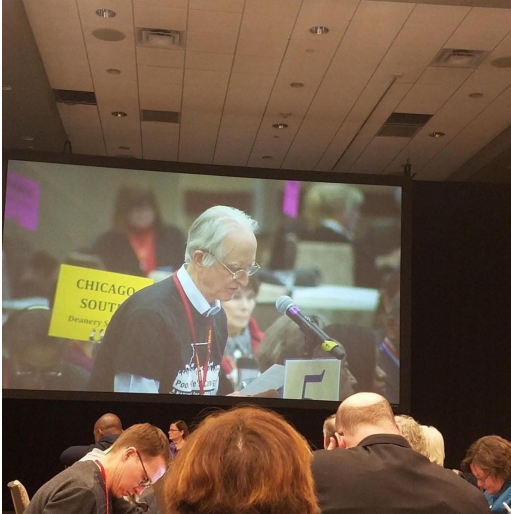
Pin Steering Committee members, Randy and Doni Heyn-Lamb, shared this report from the event: "What is Kairos Palestine? The Greek word Kairos means "a propitious moment for decision or action." In the Bible it refers to the appointed time to act. So Kairos Palestine is a Palestinian Christian movement, born from the Kairos Document of 2009, which advocates for ending the Israeli occupation and achieving a just solution to the conflict. After the obligatory welcome greetings from the Bethlehem mayor and others, the conference took off with powerful addresses by local leaders such as Rifat Cassis and Naim Ateek, citing the successes won in the first decade and the many challenges remaining for the Kairos movement.

As a finale, a panel of Christian young people presented in Arabic (headphones for all!) on their hopes and plans. Their perspective, experience and energy provided a renewed sense of hope in the context of a [shrinking Christian population](#) in Palestine."

"A Moment of Truth" has issued a [10th Anniversary Statement](#). The Statement reaffirms the Palestinian Christian cry of 2009: "*Like those who stand watch upon the tower, we repeat our call and cry out again for your solidarity, your earnest prayers and your commitment to take action. Stand up and speak out in your own setting to insist on a just peace.*" Please study the

The Diocese of Chicago Passes Resolution in Support of the Constitutional Right to Boycott

On 23 November Resolution G-182 "Freedom of Speech and the Right to Boycott" sailed to unanimous approval on a voice vote at the annual convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Chicago. This surprising vote capped years of efforts by advocates for Palestinian human rights in the diocese.



Newland Smith at the microphone

Local EPF Palestine Israel Network members shepherded the resolution with the backing of the diocesan Peace & Justice Committee. The resolution was modeled on a similar resolution that passed in the Diocese of Vermont last year; but the Chicago version was adapted to include SB 1761, the anti-Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) legislation passed by the Illinois General Assembly.

Resolution G-182:

Resolved, that the 182nd Convention of the Diocese of Chicago calls upon the President of the United States, the U.S. Congress, and the Congressional delegation of the State of Illinois to oppose legislation that penalizes or criminalizes support for nonviolent boycotts on behalf of Palestinian human rights as infringements of First Amendment rights; and be it

Further resolved, that the Convention calls upon the State of Illinois' General Assembly to delete provisions from SB 1761 ([HERE](#)) passed in 2015 that prevents Illinois pension funds from investing in foreign firms that participate in boycotts of Israel and punishes international companies that boycott goods from Israeli settlements in occupied territories.

[The Explanation](#) appended to Resolution G-182 [scroll to view] also confronted the specious charge of antisemitism leveled at BDS in SB1761 and in similar legislation in 27 states.

As sponsor, the **Rev. Dr. Anthony Vaccaro** presented the resolution and defense at the hearing on 22 November and to the assembled delegates on Saturday afternoon. **Tarek Khalil** spoke to the resolution at the hearing, providing a Palestinian perspective. Khalil is a lawyer who volunteered with the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR)-Chicago and is currently education coordinator for American Muslims for Palestine (AMP)-Chicago. EPF PIN member **Newland Smith** read to the

full gathering the eloquent statement submitted by Jewish Voice for Peace (JVP)-Chicago urging the convention to approve the resolution. PIN members **Jackie Lynn, Betsy Lent, and Ellen and Rick Lindeen** provided added support as we tabled in the exhibition hall.

*[For this PIN Bulletin, the editor has adapted the report on the resolution by EPF PIN member **Priscilla Read.**]*

WHY RESOLUTIONS ON FREEDOM TO BOYCOTT ARE SO IMPORTANT TO US AS EPISCOPALIANS AND CITIZENS

The PIN Bulletin has reported to date on the successful passage in three dioceses (Vermont, Rochester, Chicago) of resolutions supporting the First Amendment right to boycott as a form of free speech. We hope that local organizers will use these examples of successful strategies as models for similar action in 2020 at your diocesan conventions.



Mike Groll_ AP Photo

[The Context for these Resolutions](#) is the disturbing trend of penalizing or criminalizing speech on behalf of Palestinian human rights, which in effect extends immunity to Israel government policy.

**27 States have passed some form of anti-BDS legislation to prevent state and local governments from doing business with entities that boycott Israel;

** seven months ago the German parliament passed a resolution defining the BDS Movement against Israel as anti-Semitic;

** several weeks ago the [French National Assembly](#) passed an even sharper resolution saying that anti-Zionism is a type of anti-Semitism;

**The new Conservative government in the UK, led by Boris Johnson, will pass a law making it illegal for public bodies to engage with BDS. UK Special Envoy for post-Holocaust issues Eric Pickles has stated, "BDS is antisemitic and should be treated as such," explaining that the new law will not allow public bodies to work with those who boycott, divest from or sanction Israel in any way.

**on Dec. 11, President Trump issued an Executive Order claiming to

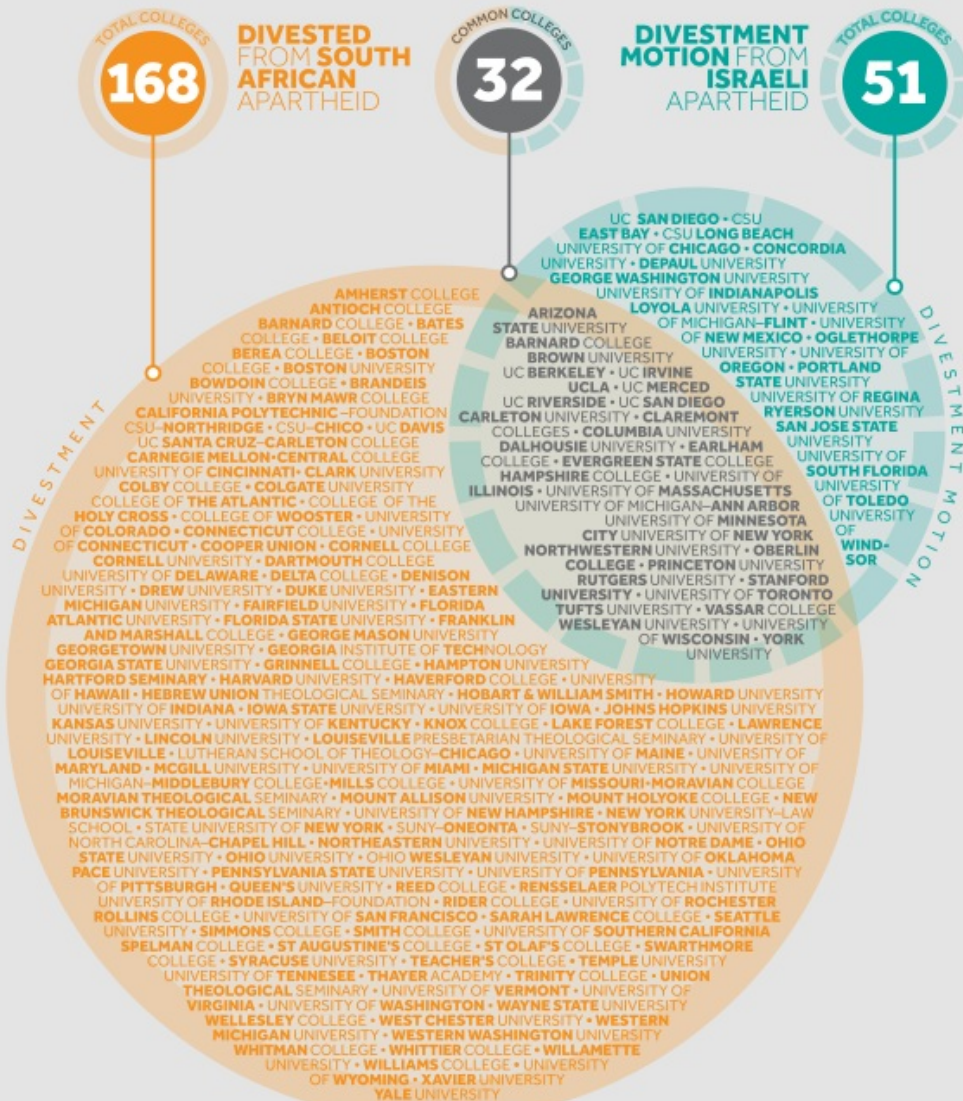
target anti-Semitism on U.S. campuses. The EO mandates that anti-Semitism will be covered by the "national-origin" protections that currently exist in Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. In this way, the EO suggests that Jews will be seen as an ethnic or national grouping, rather than a religious group, for the purposes of the law. The EO would allow the Education Department to withhold federal money from educational institutions that fail to combat discrimination against Jewish students, including criticism of Zionism or the State of Israel and calls for boycotts, divestment or sanctions.

DIVESTING FOR JUSTICE

COLLEGE DIVESTMENTS AND DIVESTMENT MOTIONS FROM SOUTH AFRICA AND ISRAEL

Boycotts and divestments have long been recognized as a legitimate and effective means to protest injustice. Today, many of the same North American colleges that

boycotted South African apartheid have had official student bodies pass motions to divest from Israeli apartheid, highlighting the power of precedence.



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