

## Middle East

### Theological Reflection

- “They shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.” (Micah 4:3)
- “A nation that continues year after year to spend more money on military defense than on programs of social uplift is approaching spiritual doom.” (Martin Luther King, Jr.)

### Background

- The US has ignored the history of the region, the culture of the people in the Middle East and that the fact no outside force has been successful in creating peace in the area.
- The US *policy of preemption* led to the Iraq War and continues to endanger stability in the Middle East.
- US and Iran have had a troubled relationship over the past 53 years. In 1953 the CIA overthrew Mohammed Mossadegh and placed the Shah who brutally quashed dissent during 25 years in power. The US armed Saddam Hussein in his war of aggression against Iran in the 1980’s.

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### Present Situation

- Over 4,000 Americans and up to 91,000 Iraqi civilians have been killed (Iraqbodycount.org). Cost is over \$500 billion, much borrowed from foreign countries. (nationalpriorities.org)
- Americans want the US out of Iraq, and countries in the area want to live peacefully with their neighbors.
- The Administration signed a “Declaration of Principles” with the Iraqi government in November 2007. It preempts the ability of future administrations to determine Iraq policy and negates role of Congress to make treaties and authorize force.

### What Will Help

- S2426 and HR5626 reassert the constitutional role of Congress in making long-term commitments by stating they do not have force of law and bans funding for implementation if not approved by Congress.
- S2130 and HR3797 affirm there is no military solution, report quarterly to Congress, work with the UN and require the president to develop a regional diplomatic plan with special envoy to implement it. S2130 also provides greater humanitarian assistance.  
(4/08)

### Member Denominations in New York:

American Baptist Churches, Episcopal Church, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Presbyterian Church (USA), Reformed Church in America, United Church of Christ, The United Methodist Church.

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