

Our Mission: With Jesus' command to love, and the Palestinians' Cry for Hope calling us to action, we covenant to educate, equip, and mobilize the Upper New York Conference of the United Methodist Church in all its entities: local congregations & regional districts, for prophetic witness and advocacy toward the goal of just and lasting peace in Palestine and Israel. Working in partnership with our Board of Global Ministries and Board of Church and Society, and other action groups, we commit to pursuing human and civil rights, security, & self-determination for all who share this land, called “holy” by each of the Abrahamic faiths: Islam, Judaism, and Christianity.

Our Vision: As disciples of Jesus, the Task Force on Peace with Justice in Palestine/Israel affirms the dignity and sacredness of all people, stands against oppression and injustice, and works for peace with justice in Palestine and Israel, in partnership with:

- UMKR - United Methodists for Kairos Response
- US CPJ - US Campaign for Palestinian Justice
- FOSNA - Friends of Sabeel North America
- CMEP - Churches for Middle East Peace
- AFSC - American Friends Service Committee
- MFSA - Methodist Federation for Social Action
- PPF - Presbyterian Peace Fellowship
- CPT - Christian Peacemaker Teams (Hebron)
- Eyewitness Palestine
- Rebuilding Alliance

Gary Bergh Scholarship

Gary Bergh, an original member of the Task Force, believed that a way for many people to learn about the actual situation in Palestine is for them to go there in person. This memorial scholarship fund is for that purpose.

The Gary Bergh Scholarship Fund furthers our United Methodist stance: “We seek for all people in the region an end to military occupation, freedom from violence, and full respect for the human rights of all under international law.”

The Scholarship helps people visit Palestine-Israel to learn what will contribute to peace with justice in the Holy Land.

How to apply:

Call Karen Peterson: 607-739-3141

How to donate:

Call Linda Bergh 315-492-8507

How to ask questions: UMKR Board:

Call Leah Mae Carlisle 315-408-9628



UPPER NEW YORK UNITED METHODIST TASK FORCE ON PEACE WITH JUSTICE IN PALESTINE/ ISRAEL



URGENT CONCERN –

No Way to Treat a Child

Approximately 2.9 million Palestinians live in the occupied West Bank, of which around 45 percent are children under the age of 18.

Quite often, Palestinian children in the West Bank as young as 14 are taken from their homes in the middle of the night, with no specific charges or evidence. Parents are not allowed to accompany them, or to know where their children are being taken or for how long. During arrest or in detention, these children endure abusive treatment facing military jurisdiction and courts.

Israeli children never face military courts.

To counter this verified unjust, and highly inappropriate treatment, contact your Member of Congress to endorse House bill HR 2590 which prevents U.S. tax dollars from paying for human rights violations against Palestinian children in Israeli military detention.

For more information see the website:
“No Way to Treat a Child.”

CURRENT ACTION CONCERNS



Home Demolitions: Israel's ethnic cleansing

Some 73 people, including 41 children, were made homeless when their dwellings were bulldozed in the Bedouin settlement of Khirbet Humsa, in the Jordan Valley, the UN reported.

In the spring of 2021, Israel gave orders for 16 evacuations and home demolitions in the Silwan neighborhood of East Jerusalem. Israeli settlers tried to move illegally into some Palestinian homes during negotiations. East Jerusalem, along with the West Bank and Gaza, is part of historical Palestine, conquered and occupied by Israel since 1967 and recognized by the UN as the Palestinian Territories.

The UN called these Israeli actions a "grave breach"

of international law.

Illegal Israeli Settlements

Land designated for a Palestinian state has been disappearing as hundreds of Israeli outposts are awarded to settler groups. Such areas mushroom into full residential and business communities, taking over Palestinian springs for lawns, fountains, and swimming pools—as Palestinians get by with rainwater from cisterns. West Bank Israeli towns are accessed by roads that only Israeli settlers may use. Land belonging to Palestinians for generations is being steadily confiscated.

Since 2004, The United Methodist Book of Resolutions has a section: “Opposition to Israeli Settlements in Palestinian Land.” The 2012 General Conference passed a resolution calling for the boycott of Israeli settlement products. For information on products to be boycotted, go to:
www.kairosresponse.org

Christian Zionism

Christian Zionism is a political and theological ideology that uses Christian texts to support the subjugation of Palestinians by the modern nation-state of Israel based on the belief that Israel has a cosmic purpose to bring about the “End Times.” It has deeply influenced evangelicals and some mainline churches. Christian Zionists make up the largest US bloc to directly fund Israeli settlements, lobby political leaders, and demonize Palestinians through lobbies like Christians United for Israel (CUFI). To learn more, read: [An Ethical Critique of Christian Zionism - ELCA](#)

Gaza

Along the Mediterranean coastline, extending for about 25 miles north of the Egyptian border, is a region known as Gaza, inhabited by nearly two million Palestinians. It is often described as *“the world's largest open-air prison.”*

Under blockade since 2006, sealed off from travel by land, air, or sea, Gaza has been declared unlivable. Water is 95% polluted and electricity—unpredictable—is available only a few hours a day. When Gaza's leaders resist, Israel retaliates with US-supplied high-power weapons, destroying infrastructure and refusing materials to rebuild. Vital farm land has been destroyed, and water supplies polluted by the bombing of sewer treatment facilities. Fishing is limited to a few miles from shore, where water is most degraded.

Demand a peace process that respects International Law.

Legislation Passed at Annual Conference:

--To divest from governments that maintain a prolonged military occupation in contradiction to International Law.

--To divest from Caterpillar, Hewlett Packard and Motorola Solutions because of their role in the military occupation of Palestine.

Useful Reading:

Blood Brothers, and *We Belong to the Land*: personal narratives by Elias Chacour

“Kairos Palestine, a moment of truth,” by Palestinian Christians to the Christian World

“My Plea to the people of Israel: Liberate yourselves by liberating Palestine,” by Archbishop Desmond Tutu

“Lest We Forget: The US – Israel Relationship”
“The Illusion of an Imaginary Common Interest”
by Americans for Middle East Understanding