



**Ongoing violence in Israel and Gaza:
Call to Action from
Palestine Network - Shining Waters Region (PalNet - SW)**



October 2023

We lament and denounce the violence taking place in Israel and Gaza in recent days. We call for combat to end and the international courts to investigate all reports of war crimes on all sides.

As people dedicated to peace, justice and human rights for all citizens of Palestine and Israel, we commend those on the ground there and elsewhere who have dedicated their lives to fostering solidarity and struggling for a real and lasting peace.

We call on United Churches and United Church people to:

- pray for Palestinians and Israelis, and an end to violent conflict and the growth of mutual respect;
- make their own voices heard in the movement to embrace non-violence and seek a sustainable coexistence of all inhabitants of Israel and Palestine;
- pray and work for an end to anti-Semitism and Islamophobia in Canada, and the development of a truly inclusive society. This includes continuing to take great care in worship with those passages of Christian scripture that denigrate Jews or blame Jews for the death of Jesus;
- reach out to nearby faith communities (Christian, Jewish, Muslim and others) to build networks of understanding, peace-making and solidarity;
- call on the Canadian government to support the right of Israelis and Palestinians to live with true security;
- generously support UN and other organizations seeking to bring relief and support to those affected by violence and/or cope with the trauma brought on by violence.

Assistance for your community of faith – Sunday service, after church, mid-week,

Speakers from PalNet – SW are available to help your congregation understand the context of the ongoing conflict between Israel and Palestinians, and to process the current wave of violence.

More information

While there is a growing body of very balanced explorations of the root causes of strife between Israel and non-state actors such as Hamas, and many calls for real dialogue between Israel and Palestinians, there is also much misinformation spreading on social media. Those seeking information are encouraged to rely on trusted sources.

Recent statements from church sources on the conflict in Palestine and Israel:

- Ecumenical Statement on Violence between Hamas and Israel from five Canadian denominations, including the United Church of Canada, and Kairos: Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives: <https://united-church.ca/news/ecumenical-statement-violence-between-hamas-and-israel>.
- Letter from the United Church General Council Executive (and associated members) and the National Indigenous Council to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau calling for a ceasefire in Gaza: <https://united-church.ca/news/dear-prime-minister>
- United Network for Justice and Peace in Palestine and Israel (or UNJPPI, a network within the United Church of Canada): <https://www.unjppi.org/index.html>
- World Council of Churches: WCC calls for immediate ceasefire, urgent humanitarian aid for Gaza: <https://www.oikoumene.org/news/wcc-calls-for-immediate-ceasefire-urgent-humanitarian-aid-for-gaza>.