



Sunday, June 3 2007
Church Action For Peace in Palestine and Israel

END 40 YEARS OF ILLEGAL OCCUPATION.
NEGOTIATE A JUST PEACE NOW!

Dear Worship Leader,

Remember the last time you heard good news from the Middle East? There hasn't been too much in recent memory, but if we work together, now may be the time to change that.

Forty years ago, the Six-Day War began a course of history that has been disastrous for Israelis and Palestinians. The resulting Israeli Occupation of the West Bank and Gaza has confined Palestinians to an existence that has been characterized by mass arrests, house and farm demolitions, daily curfews and military invasions of their towns and cities. Israelis have lived in fear of suicide bombings and other forms of attacks.

It doesn't have to be this way. As Christians with a deep connection to the Holy Land, we can help end the Occupation and work towards a lasting peace for both Israelis and Palestinians. On June 3, Christians around the world are asked to take time to pray and be in solidarity with the people of the Holy Land. KAIROS invites your congregation to be part of this special Sunday.

To help you, we're providing:

- some **background reading** on the current crisis in Israel/Palestine,
- a selection of **worship resources** for integration into your service for June 3, and
- a **bulletin insert** that you can photocopy and use on June 3.

KAIROS is a partnership of eleven Canadian churches and church agencies committed to faithful action for justice and peace. In Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories, we work with Israelis and Palestinians through

- The **Department of Services to Palestinian Refugees** - an aid and development agency formed by the **Middle Eastern Council of Churches** to provide health care, education, and self-sufficiency to Palestinians.
- The **Jerusalem Link** - two women's organizations, one Palestinian (**Jerusalem Center for Women**) and one Israeli (**Bat Shalom**), who together work to build networks for peace through political advocacy, civic education, solidarity and education programs.
- **Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center** - a grassroots liberation theology movement seeking to deepen the spirituality of Palestinian Christians and promote unity through social action.



If you feel you can do more to be in solidarity with groups like these, contact
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Understanding the Occupation: A KAIROS Perspective

Sources: B'Tselem: the Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories; the United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the Occupied Palestinian Territories; the Middle East Research and Information Project.

The area that now comprises the State of Israel and the Palestinian Territories has long been the site of dispute. In the twentieth century, a series of contradictory promises about nationhood were made to Jewish and Arab communities in the region, leading to violent conflict and finally coming to a head after the Second World War and the accompanying increase of Jewish migration to Palestine. In 1947, the United Nations General Assembly voted to partition Palestine into two territories and an international zone including Jerusalem and Bethlehem. Conflict between Arabs and Jews broke out, and in 1948, the State of Israel declared its existence. War continued until armistice agreements between Israel and the neighboring Arab states were signed in 1949. The ceasefire line of those agreements, also called the “green line,” left Israel in control of 78% of the territory of historic Palestine with 22% under the control of Egypt (the Gaza Strip) and Jordan (the West Bank including East Jerusalem). More than 750,000 Palestinians were displaced or expelled between late 1947 and the first half of 1949.

The Arab-Israeli conflict continued into the Cold War, and by 1967 clashes between Israel and Syria had escalated. Israel denounced the Syrian regime for failing to halt cross-border attacks by Palestinians from inside Syrian territory. Syria requested assistance from other Arab nations, and in May 1967, Egyptian troops entered the Sinai Peninsula bordering Israel. A diplomatic crisis ensued as Egypt occupied Sharm al-Shaykh at the southern tip of the Sinai Peninsula and proclaimed a blockade of the Israeli port of Eilat on the Gulf of Aqaba. On June 5, Israel preemptively attacked Egypt and Syria, destroying their air forces on the ground within a few hours. Jordan belatedly joined in the fighting, and consequently was attacked by Israel as well. The Egyptian, Syrian and Jordanian armies were defeated, and Israel captured the West Bank from Jordan, the Gaza Strip and the Sinai Peninsula from Egypt, and the Golan Heights from Syria. The conflict lasted only 6 days and left Israel in control of the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza, which remain under military occupation to this day.

After the 1967 war, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 242, which notes the “inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force” and calls for Israeli withdrawal from lands seized in the war and the right of all states in the area to peaceful existence within secure and recognized borders. Israel’s annexation of East Jerusalem and other territories is therefore illegal under international law. The Fourth Geneva Convention, to which Israel and Canada are signatories, requires that an occupying power not transfer its citizens into occupied territories. Over the past 40 years the Israeli government has promoted and facilitated many Israeli settlements in the West Bank that now house over 400,000 settlers. In 2004, the International Court of Justice issued a non-binding advisory opinion stating that Israel’s separation barrier (the Wall), where built inside the West Bank, is contrary to international law and must be removed.

Approximately 400,000 Palestinians were displaced (half for a second time) during the 1967 war: Subsequent displacement and expulsion of refugees has continued and today it is estimated that three-quarters of the Palestinian people are displaced. More than half live in refugee camps outside the borders of their historic homeland, often in very

difficult conditions. Additionally for those remaining within the West Bank and Gaza, military and economic pressure resulting from Israel's Occupation has caused a substantial out-migration, particularly within the Christian population.

The effects of the Occupation are legion. More than 9000 Palestinians, many without charge, are detained in Israeli prisons. There are 54 permanent checkpoints within the West Bank, an average of 160 flying (mobile) checkpoints, hundreds of physical obstructions set up by the Israeli military, and 41 sections of road (for a total of 700 km) within the Occupied Territories on which Palestinian movement is restricted but on which Israeli settlers can move freely. There is a shocking death toll. According to B'Tselem, an Israeli human rights organization, 4093 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli military or civilians and 1021 Israelis (military and civilian) have been killed by Palestinians since September of 2000. Of these deaths, 945 have been children.

With our Israeli and Palestinian partners, KAIROS calls for an end to the Occupation, a just negotiated settlement for the Palestinians who fled their homes in 1947-1949, and a two-state solution based on the internationally agreed-upon 1949 borders.

To learn more, visit these websites:

- *Bat Shalom*: <http://www.batshalom.org>
- *Jerusalem Center for Women*: <http://www.j-c-w.org/home.htm>
- *Middle Eastern Council of Churches*:
http://www.mec-churches.org/main_eng.htm
- *Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center*: www.sabeel.org
- *B'Tselem - Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories*: www.btselem.org
- *Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions*: <http://www.icahd.org/eng/>
- *United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs*:
<http://www.ochaopt.org>
- *Canadian Government's Official Position*:
http://dfait-maeci.gc.ca/middle_east/can_policy-en.asp
- *Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI)*:
www.eappi.org
- *Middle East Research and Information Project*:
www.merip.org/palestine-israel_primer/toc-pal-isr-primeAll:html

WORSHIP RESOURCES

All worship resources are taken from resources prepared for an ecumenical service that will be used in Jerusalem during the week of International Church Action for Peace in Palestine and Israel.

Opening Invocation

“Let justice roll down like rivers, and righteousness like a mighty stream.”

We gather today to remember, to pray and to seek direction after 40 years of Occupation. Living under and with the Occupation has left the people of the Holy Land an unending dread. We know as Christians that there is hope in God and there is a path to justice and peace. Yet we ask “how long O Lord?”

O loving God,

We remember those who struggle for freedom,
We remember the disabled who cling on to hope,
We remember the injured who fight for their life,
We remember the captives who yearn for freedom,
We remember the deportees who long for the homeland.
We remember our towns, villages and camps that are often under siege.
We remember the children whose eyes reflect the light of the future,
We remember the brave who say “no” to injustice,
We lift the olive branch which says “yes’ to a just peace

O God, we call upon you to grant us your patience, determination and power so that we may say:

No to hate and yes to love,
No to death and yes to life,
No to falsehood and yes to truth
No to oppression and yes to justice,
No to cruelty and yes to mercy,
No to violence and yes to the path of peace,
No, no matter what it may cost, and yes, no matter what it may cost.
For you are the source of love leading to reconciliation and forgiveness.

Prayer of Penitence

O God of justice and judgment, bring your mighty hand into the deep pit of violence, despair, and ruthlessness that shapes the lives of so many in the Holy Land.

Kyrie eleison

We thirst for justice, O God, because we know that there will be no peace until equity prevails for all people and until the forces of evil are defeated by your commandment to love, respect, and honor all our sisters and brothers.

Kyrie eleison

We thirst, too, that a pervading sense of your righteous judgement will fill this land, not from vindictiveness or desire for retribution, but in order that the power of your Word might become real for those who suffer and those who cause suffering. Both are badly damaged by the violent insanity that prevails in the Holy Land.

Kyrie eleison

May the hearts of both those who suffer and those who kill, maim terrorize, or dehumanize others through their dependence on military might remember that you are the ultimate judge of all our thoughts, words, and deeds.

Kyrie eleison

We ask for your mercy and forgiveness for any part we have contributed to the pain of others by what we have done or what we have not done. We ask your forgiveness for our silence when we see oppression and do not speak out. We ask your forgiveness when we speak words that hurt rather than heal.

Kyrie eleison

Merciful God, so much conflict is within us. Our jealousy, our pride our passion, our power-seeking and our greed all disturb the balance of life and undermine the harmony of society. Forgive us, and lead us by your Spirit, that in our lives love may go hand in hand with peace so filling our community with joy

Kyrie eleison

Intercessions

One: Heavenly Father, we praise and glorify you. You are our only refuge in a troubled world.

All: We praise and glorify you, Lord.

One: We thank you for the birth of your Son, Jesus Christ, in Bethlehem; his refuge in Egypt, his childhood in Nazareth and his ministry in this Land.

ALL: Father, we thank you

ONE: We thank you for his death on the Cross here in Jerusalem, where he carried our sin and suffering, and for his glorious Resurrection in which he gave us new life with him.

ALL: Father, we thank you.

ONE: So Lord, we come before you with all our troubles and pains

ALL: Lord, have mercy on us.

ONE: We pray for all victims of bloodshed and violence as well as for the perpetrators of these evils.

ALL: Lord, have mercy on us.

ONE: We pray for the children and young people that you may give them hope for the future.

ALL: Lord, have mercy on us.

ONE: We pray for all bereaved families, the unemployed, the elderly and all who seek to help them.

ALL: Lord, have mercy on us.

ONE: We ask the guidance of your Holy Spirit for all the leaders of this Land; that they may be inspired to work for your peace with your justice.

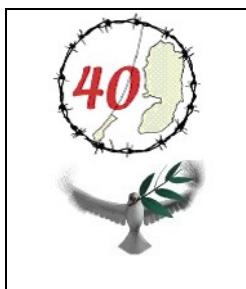
ALL: Lord, have mercy on us.

So we pray together:

Gracious God, your love knows no limits. Fill our hearts with your compassion; open our eyes to your presence in the world; enlarge our minds to understand your will. Take our hands and minister through them. Speak through our words and direct our feet in the path of peace that Christ may be revealed in us and the world may believe. Amen

Closing Prayer

Help us Lord to end Occupation - not by revenge, not by hatred - but through seeing you in each other as Palestinians and Israelis, Jews, Christians and Muslims, and to accept each others humanity whilst mutually recognizing each others religious, civil, political, and national rights, for Jesus' sake. Amen.



Sunday June 3 2007
Take Action for Peace
in Palestine and Israel
END 40 YEARS OF ILLEGAL
OCCUPATION
NEGOTIATE A JUST PEACE NOW!

June 2007 marks 40 years since the beginning of the Israeli Occupation of Palestinian land. These 40 years have been marked by terrible violence and suffering. An estimated 3/4 of Palestinians are displaced; more than half live in refugee camps outside the borders of their historic homeland

According to B'Tselem, an Israeli human rights organization, 4093 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli military or civilians and 1021 Israelis (military and civilian) have been killed by Palestinians since September of 2000. Of these deaths, 945 have been children.

Yet Justice is possible. The Occupation can be ended. Jews, Christians, and Muslims can live in peace. KAIROS calls for cessation of military solutions and support for immediate multilateral negotiations to end the Occupation and.

Today, as part of the International Church Action for Peace in Palestine and Israel, we ask you to pray and take action.



KAIROS: Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives is a partnership of eleven Canadian churches and church agencies committed to faithful action for justice and peace. To find out what you can do for a just peace in the Middle East, visit www.kairoscanada.org or contact Desmond Jagger-Parsons at djagpar@kairoscanada.org or 1-877-403-8933 ext. 239

Prayers for Peace in Palestine & Israel

Oh God, grant peace to your Holy Land and to the whole world!
Root it deeply in the hearts of all humanity.

For your divine peace is the peace the world cannot give.

Your peace sets free all those caught in the nets of physical or psychological violence, whether perpetrator or victim.

We often feel powerless as we witness the many forms of violence and injustice in war, in politics, in society and even in our individual lives.

Oh God, fill the mighty with your Spirit of love and justice.

Help us to contribute to the establishment of your kingdom of peace by acknowledging and living according to your divine law, given to us for the peace and the well-being of all humanity and the whole of your creation.

For that we pray, Oh God of love and faithfulness.
We praise you and thank you forever and ever
All: Amen.

Holy Spirit, give us the spiritual fruit of peace;
the peace that cares for the well-being of the people;
the peace that rebukes injustice and violence;
the peace that seeks freedom for all;
the peace that heals the hurts of the past;
the peace that enables for today
and releases the potential for tomorrow;
the peace that is new life in Christ.
Amen.