

Resolution C-1: Notice of Motion

Moved by: Zilla Jones Seconded by: The Rev. Canon Mary Lyseki

THAT this Synod respond to the call of Palestinian Christians to stand in solidarity with them against the ongoing occupation by:

1. Strongly encouraging all parishes and parishioners to pray regularly for all victims of the current conflicts in Israel and the Occupied Territories of Palestine, and for a just and lasting peace;
2. i) ask the Bishop to request that Diocesan staff recommended resources that enable parishes to faithfully respond, including KAIROS II, with prayer, theological study, advocacy and practical support for the people of Palestine, and to communicate this information to parishes by March 31, 2027;
ii) strongly encourage all parishes in the Diocese of Rupert's Land to engage with these resources as part of a quest for greater understanding of the situation;
3. Calling on all trustees of investment funds connected to the Diocese or parishes within it to explore and implement an ethical investment policy relating to the occupied Palestinian territory and to review investment policies in light of long-established international law including the International Court of Justice Advisory Opinion of July 19, 2024 on the illegality of the occupation of Palestinian territory;
4. Strongly encouraging parishes and individual parishioners to donate, as they are able, to Alongside Hope's support of the Anglican Diocese of Jerusalem and the Al Ahli hospital.

Background:

Since October 7, 2023, Israel has killed approximately 74,500 Palestinians. At least 21,000 are children. This is 3% of the total Palestinian population. 247 journalists, 587 health care workers, and 1,513 aid workers have been killed, and counting. Israel has been killing Palestinians since the Nakba of 1948 when Palestinians were expelled from their homes to make way for settlers at the founding of Israel. Thousands of Palestinians are being held in Israel without due process. The current situation in Gaza has been called a genocide by the United Nations, Human Rights Watch, Genocide Watch, Oxfam, Doctors Without Borders, International Association of Genocide Scholars, and many more organizations.

Christian churches in Gaza have been damaged by bombing, but continue to serve as refuges for both Christians and Muslims. The Al Ahli Hospital, the last hospital left in Gaza, run by Christian Churches, was bombed and is struggling to function with significant damage, with limited power provided by a generator. In the West Bank, Israeli settlers have lit fires near churches and used violence to chase Palestinians from their land. The heads of Churches in the sacred city of Jerusalem have described systemic attempts to erase the Christian presence there through attacks on Christian clergy, churches, and organizations. Israeli forces have deliberately destroyed Christian icons in Palestine and Lebanon.

Amidst this suffering, the Anglican Church has largely been silent. Palestinian Christians tell us in Kairos II (available here: https://www.kairospalestine.ps/images/Final_Kairos_document_II_English.pdf) that they, the people of the very first church, feel abandoned and forgotten. They are watching pro-Palestine resistance being demonized and criminalized around the world. They are asking us to bear witness, to use our privilege and our platforms to speak the truth about their lives and realities.

This Synod has an opportunity to be on the right side of history. We ask you to join us and join the Palestinian Christian people in living as disciples of Jesus Christ, who said that "the last will be first and the first will be last" (Matthew 20:16).