PRAY - STUDY - ACT

Ceasefire NOW!
Spring 2024

As we write this PSA for inclusion in the Spring 2024 newsletter mailing, the situation in Gaza has continued to deteriorate: predictions of famine, the February “Flour Massacre” of over 100 Palestinians seeking food aid, rejections by both Israel and Hamas over proposed terms for a ceasefire, and the continuing flow of arms from the U.S. to Israel (more than 100 separate military deals since the invasion of Gaza began according to The Washington Post). Pax Christi USA has been consistent and unequivocal in our calls for a ceasefire, and despite the obstacles, we continue to amplify that message.

Many thanks for the continuing efforts of all in our movement who keep us informed as to opportunities for prayer, study and action in support of a ceasefire in Gaza, including: the Palestine Solidarity Working Group and particularly Abigail Abysalh Metzger, one of Pax Christi International’s representatives at the United Nations in New York; staff member Judy Coode who has been representing us on weekly #CeasefireNow organizing calls; and Ambassador of Peace Scott Wright who recently returned from serving as our delegate on a mission to the West Bank.

For more resources to pray, study and act for a ceasefire in Gaza, visit our Palestine page on the website at https://paxchristiusa.org/palestine/.

**PRAY**

>> Make the Muslim-Jewish-Christian Prayer for Peace a regular part of your individual and communal prayer practice.

In the Spring 2024 newsletter mailing, every member of Pax Christi USA will have received the recently redesigned “Muslim-Jewish-Christian Prayer for Peace,” originally published by Pax Christi USA and the Fellowship of Reconciliation over two decades ago. Many of you have been asking for us to make the prayer card available again, especially in light of the events of October 7, 2023 and the subsequent invasion of Gaza. The prayer card can be posted at a prominent place in your household to serve as a reminder in raising up your voice for a ceasefire. The prayer card is available in the Pax Christi USA Online Store in packets of 100 and can be distributed in your parish, at demonstrations, in schools, in interfaith gatherings, or left in public places to amplify the message of peace. The prayer cards have the prayer in English on one side and Spanish on the other.

Order your prayer cards at https://paxchristiusa.3dcartstores.com/.

**STUDY**

>> Read the report from The Stones Cry Out delegation. From February 27 to March 3, a delegation—including Pax Christi USA Ambassador of Peace Scott Wright and representatives from Friends of Sabeel North America, the Palestinian Christian Alliance for Peace, Kairos USA, the Indiana Center for Middle East Peace and other groups—visited Palestinian religious, political, and NGO leaders in the West Bank. What follows is an excerpt from their report. Find the entire report at https://cutt.ly/stonescryout.
We say it again: This is a US war. We are party to genocide. We give Israel a free pass. Israel continues to violate international law with impunity. The slaughter could not happen without the backing of the US government. Our tax dollars provide billions in aid to Israel, weapons, and full cover for Israel's crimes. The fighter jets, bombs, tanks, chemical weapons are US made. The US vetoes UN ceasefire resolutions.

The US believes it is in its geopolitical interest to protect Israel, believing Israel is key to the strategic military, economic, and political interests of the US. On the contrary, as Israel's genocide in Gaza and ethnic cleansing inside Palestine continue, Israel and the US are less safe, they are pariahs on the world stage, with other countries looking to China and Russia for support.

The US is a shield and bank for Israel to commit war crimes. Our adversaries are watching and exploiting our moral failing to perpetuate their own.

We heard various political solutions offered, but all agree that Zionism – and support by the US government and Christian Zionists in the West – is the problem. The racist, settler colonial project that is Zionism must be rejected out of hand and a system of government established based on equity, human dignity, and full civil, political, and human rights. Zionism makes Jews around the world less safe and contributes to antisemitism. If the US wants to be Israel's friend, it must realize that this genocidal action fosters even more acts of antisemitism and disgust for the US. It is in no one’s interest, no one’s.

We call on the United States to follow international law, including support for the recent ICJ ruling declaring a “plausible case” for Israel’s genocide in Gaza. Palestinians no longer want to hear Western and US platitudes about democratic values and equal rights. The words are a lie. The US needs to apply the values that it espouses equally – democracy, human rights, equality, and equity. Put up or shut up…

ACT

>> Urge U.S. officials to support restoration of critical UNRWA funding. The United States has suspended critical funding of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) in response to Israel’s allegations that 12 of their 13,000 employees (.09 percent) in Gaza took part in the horrific Hamas attack of October 7. The decision by the U.S. to suspend aid to UNRWA, the primary source of support for millions of Palestinians, came only hours after the International Court of Justice (ICJ) ordered Israel to take “all measures within its power” to prevent acts that could amount to genocide against Palestinians in Gaza. Please write, call, or text your elected representatives TODAY and tell them they must immediately resume U.S. funding of UNRWA – it is an absolutely vital lifeline to millions of people who are already suffering, and its loss would be unconscionable.

Find this action alert and links to contact your representatives at https://cutt.ly/restore-unrwa-funding.

>> Fast for Gaza every Thursday. Fast for Gaza extends a global invitation to people of all faiths, and those who adhere to none, to abstain from food for one day (Thursdays) in solidarity with the people of Gaza, and to break the fast together at sunset. The fast will continue every Thursday until a permanent ceasefire is called.

The tremendous violence incurred on the people of Gaza by Israeli occupation forces calls upon us to take a stand with the people of Gaza as they continue to face the cruelty of collective punishment and needless suffering. While fasting invites empathy with the suffering of others, it also makes us aware of our material comforts and makes a public statement in an effort to create a change to current realities of violence and injustice.

Find more resources including a media kit at https://mizna.org/mizna-news/fast-for-gaza/.