

Palestine Solidarity Statement

In 2016 First Presbyterian Church Palo Alto declared itself a Peace Church. This declaration was born out of careful consideration of the scriptures, our long faith tradition, our commitment to social justice, and our devotion to the love and the teachings of Jesus.

Based on these values and commitments, we condemn the catastrophic violence in Gaza and the West Bank being perpetrated by the government of Israel and funded by the United States government. Though we, as a Peace Church, condemn all human rights abuses and war crimes wherever they occur, we feel compelled to make this particular statement given the sheer scale of the current violence and devastating impacts on Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank.

We address our criticism to the perpetrators of injustice and not to a specific people or religion, and thus we level this critique against violence sanctioned by the government of Israel. We are grateful to the voices of diverse people of all faiths who have taken this stand before us, and with whom we ally ourselves now.

It is especially critical that we in the U.S. recognize that the responsibility for the current genocidal violence in Gaza and apartheid injustices in the West Bank are inextricably tied to the U.S. and are supported by our government's funding. Even as we oppose these abuses of basic human rights and violations of international law, we are complicit as citizens of the country funding it.

In taking this stance of solidarity with Palestine, we resolve to:

- Find ways to speak up and amplify the voices of our Palestinian siblings who are the subjects of this current catastrophic violence, and to support efforts to provide humanitarian aid to Palestinian residents
- Support and ally ourselves with organizations, both locally and globally, that are advocating for human rights and peaceful solutions in the region
- Continue to affirm our respect for all faith traditions including Judaism and Islam, and to reject all forms of racism, dehumanization, and human rights abuses
- Continue to educate ourselves and our local community about the far-reaching impacts of these injustices and violence
- Advocate that the United States government protect basic universal human rights for all people and discontinue aid to the government of Israel until the violations of human rights being undertaken with our funding are addressed
- Call on any corporations that are directly profiting from the current genocidal violence in Gaza and apartheid injustices in the West Bank to cease these activities, especially companies local to Palo Alto that are providing military and surveillance technology