



Palestine and Israel Working Group of Mennonite Church Canada

Recommended resources for study and action

This list has been carefully selected to help congregations and individuals study and put into action the resolution on Palestine and Israel that was passed at the assembly of Mennonite Church Canada in July 2016. All are downloadable at CommonWord (links provided in the descriptions). Many other books, videos and other resources are also available for in-depth study of the issues confronting Palestine and Israel today (see www.commonword.ca/go/602 for a larger selection). The items listed on pages 2 and 3 are the top recommendations of the working group.

Background information for individual or group reading

1. **The Resolution on Palestine and Israel.** The text of the resolution, including the background preamble, is downloadable at: www.commonword.ca/go/1041. (See #5 below for study guide.)
2. **Mennonite Church Canada Resolution on Palestine and Israel: FAQ.** This document answers the main questions that Mennonite Church Canada staff have received about the resolution. Available online at: www.commonword.ca/go/827
3. **Kairos Palestine: A Moment of Truth.** This is the 2009 statement created by leaders of all the major Christian groups in Palestine, calling the global church to stand with the Palestinian church against the injustices of Israel's occupation of Palestine. This call was a major reason for the Mennonite Church Canada resolution. Available online at: www.commonword.ca/go/1042
4. **MCC and Palestine and Israel: Commonly Asked Questions.** This nine-page brochure, available electronically and in hard copy from MCC offices, provides a handy reference for basic background information on Palestine and Israel, based on MCC's decades of humanitarian and advocacy work in the region. Available online at: www.commonword.ca/go/1035

Study guides

5. **Pathways for Peace and Justice in Palestine and Israel.** This four-session script and power point, designed by resolution co-mover Palmer Becker, introduces church members to the background and content of the Mennonite Church Canada resolution. Each session includes about 20 minutes of presentation, followed by discussion questions. The sessions can be adapted in a modular way, depending on the group's level of awareness, or use of other resources. **Part 1:** "The Israeli People and their Quest for a Secure Home." **Part 2:** "The Palestinian People and their Quest for Justice." **Part 3:** Why should we be involved? (Interprets and seeks to apply Part 1 of the Resolution). **Part 4:** What are we resolved to do? (Interprets and seeks to apply Part 2 of the Resolution.) Available online at: www.commonword.ca/go/1032

6. **Kairos Palestine: A Moment of Truth: Four-Week Congregational Study Plan.** This four-week series, prepared by member of Mennonite Church USA, explores the statement from Palestinian church leaders that provided the motivation and the foundation for the Mennonite Church Canada resolution. Some of the applications to the US context will need to be adapted to the Canadian context, but overall, this is an excellent introduction to the perspective of Palestinian Christians. Available online at: www.commonword.ca/go/1036

Supporting resources

Books

1. ***Under Vine and Fig Tree: Biblical Theologies of Land***, edited by Alain Epp Weaver (2004). This book examines ways in which the Bible has been used to justify violence and dispossession and ways it can be received as a life-giving word for Palestinians and Israelis wishing to co-exist in peace and harmony. Includes discussion questions, action suggestions, maps and a timeline. Available from CommonWord: www.commonword.ca/go/1043
2. ***Whose Land? Whose Promise?*** by Gary Burge. An exploration of Christian attitudes towards the politics and theology surrounding Israel and Palestine through personal anecdotes and biblical exegesis, written by Wheaton College professor Gary Burge. Available from CommonWord: www.commonword.ca/go/1049
3. ***Palestinian Memories: The Story of a Palestinian Mother and Her People***, by Alex Awad. The story of one Palestinian family's experience of "The Nakba" (catastrophe), when hundreds of thousands of Palestinians became refugees in the wake of the Arab-Israeli war in 1948. Includes a section of theological and political reflection by Awad, a leading Palestinian pastor and teacher. Available from CommonWord: www.commonword.ca/go/1037
4. ***Chosen? Reading the Bible Amid the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict***, by Walter Brueggemann (2015). One of America's top biblical scholars answers questions often asked about how the Bible addresses issues of Palestine and Israel today. Available from CommonWord: www.commonword.ca/go/376
5. ***Justice and only Justice: A Palestinian Theology of Liberation***, by Naim Ateek (1990). The foundational exploration of liberation theology from a Palestinian perspective, exploring biblical and theological issues in the context of present-day violence, oppression and dispossession. Available from CommonWord: www.commonword.ca/go/1048

NEW IN SPRING 2017

What is Palestine/Israel? Answers to Common Questions, by Sonia K. Weaver. An updated version of this popular 64-page primer, originally produced by MCC in 2004. Available from Herald Press and CommonWord in spring, 2017.

Palestine Justice Exercise. A one-hour interactive learning tool to help groups learn about the history of Palestine and Israel as a way of understanding the present context. Modelled on the KAIROS Blanket Exercise, it invites the participants to experience the loss of land, as Indigenous Peoples have experienced that loss in Canada. Available from MCC and CommonWord in spring, 2017.

6. **The Lemon Tree: An Arab, a Jew, and the heart of the Middle East**, by Sandy Tolan (2006). A well-researched narrative of two people on opposite sides of the Palestinian/Israeli divide finding their common humanity. Available from CommonWord: www.commonword.ca/go/1061
7. **Anxious for Armageddon: A Call to Partnership for Middle Eastern and Western Christians**, by Don Wagner. This book includes a riveting account of Wagner's personal journey toward a view of the Palestine/Israel situation that takes seriously God's call to justice and human rights. Available from CommonWord: www.commonword.ca/go/1062

Discussion papers

8. **Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions: A question for the church**. MCC Peace Office Newsletter, July-September, 2012. 12-page newsletter with articles by assorted authors associated with MCC. Available by request from Ottawa@mcccanada.ca or at CommonWord: www.commonword.ca/go/1046
9. **Christian Zionism and Peace in the Holy Land**. MCC Peace Office Newsletter, July-September 2005. 12-page newsletter with articles by assorted authors closely associated with MCC. Available by request from Ottawa@mcccanada.ca or at CommonWord: www.commonword.ca/go/1047

Videos

10. **Israel and Palestine: An Animated Introduction**. Produced by Jewish Voice for Peace, this 6 minute video gives a succinct overview of Israel's modern history and the obstacles to peace. Watch online at: www.commonword.ca/go/1033
11. **Children of the Nakba**. Produced by Mennonite Central Committee in 2005, this 25-minute video introduces us to the lives of Palestinian refugees. Study guide available. Watch online or borrow from CommonWord: www.commonword.ca/go/1034
12. **With God on Our Side**. A 2010 exploration and critique of Christian Zionism from the perspectives of Palestinian Christian leaders and international observers who believe that a new path of reconciliation between Palestinians and Israelis is possible. Available from Common Word: www.commonword.ca/go/1051

Other church-related organizations working in peace advocacy for Palestine and Israel

(all have extensive links and resources; starred ones have resources for economic actions)

Mennonite Central Committee Canada: www.mcccanada.ca

*Mennonite Palestine Israel Network (MennoPIN): www.mennopin.org

*American Friends Service Committee (Quakers): www.afsc.org

*Canadian Friends of Sabeel: www.necefsabeel.ca

*United Network for Peace and Justice in Palestine and Israel: www.unippi.org