

At First Congregational United Church of Christ, our hearts are breaking for every experience of violence, death, and deprivation that has taken place since renewed conflict erupted in Israel and Palestine on October 7th. As a Peace with Justice Church, we are called to express God's will for love and peace among all human communities, both local and global. In this calling, we are resolutely committed to nonviolence and conflict resolutions that honor human dignity, defend basic human rights and needs for all people, and advocate for processes of truth and reconciliation which are the non-negotiable foundations of justice and peace. We grieve with our Jewish siblings and repudiate anti-semitic attitudes and actions in all their expressions. We also grieve with our Palestinian siblings and repudiate anti-Palestinian and anti-Muslim attitudes and actions in all their expressions.

Recognizing that war is always violent and never can create true peace, justice, and reconciliation, we call for an immediate and complete cease-fire in the Israeli-Palestine conflict. We repudiate the attacks, hostage-taking, and all other violent actions by the Palestinian political party, Hamas, against Jews and Israel. We repudiate genocide everywhere, including the genocidal actions of the Israeli government by impeding delivery of aid, food, water, and electricity to Gaza/Palestine alongside a military campaign with ongoing mass civilian casualties. Furthermore, we renounce the actions of our own United States government in offering support politically, militarily, and financially to the government of Israel as it conducts a war campaign in Palestine.

**First Congregational United Church of Christ continues to join our ecumenical partners in calling for the following:**

- Condemnation of the violence of Hamas and the Israeli government's use of force against Palestinian civilians in Gaza
- A call for an immediate and permanent cease-fire
- The allowance of the provision of humanitarian aid for Palestinians and an end to collective punishment
- The guarantee of and respect for safe spaces for people to find shelter
- Support for robust diplomatic efforts to resolve the core issues

We hear our Palestinian Christian siblings asking us not to turn away. As Christians living in the United States, we name our disproportionate responsibility to call our own government to account in response not only to current events but the entire context and root causes of this war, from the Holocaust to the Naqba to the present. Both our own context and our common humanity compel us to bear witness and commit to non-violent action until the day our faith traditions are no longer appropriated for war, but reflect forever and truly the peace and justice of God's kin-dom.