



World Council
of Churches

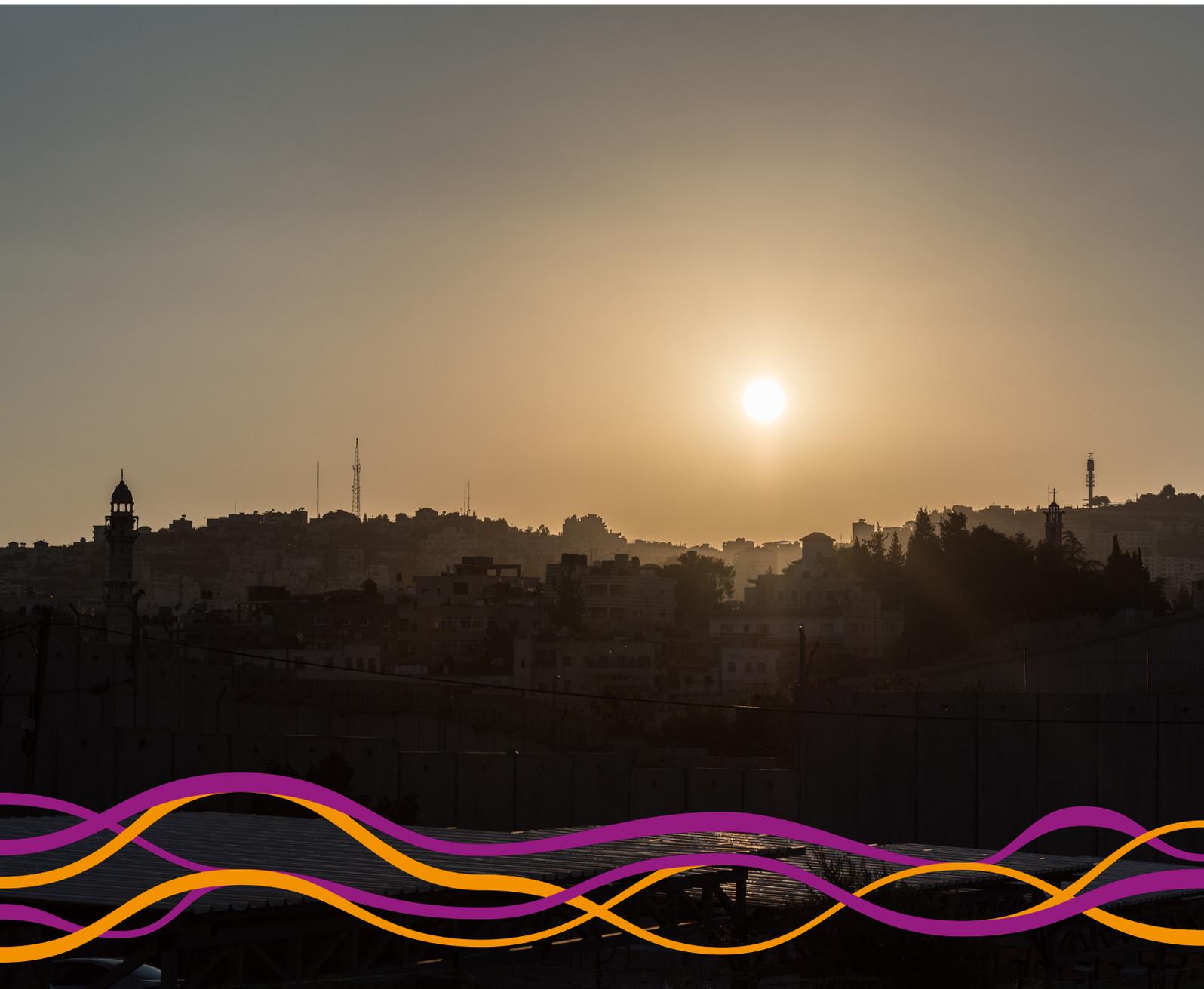
World Week of Peace for Palestine and Israel – Arts for Justice and Peace

*I will also praise You with a harp,
Even Your truth, O my God*

Date: 18 – 25 September 2021

Theme: Psalm 71:22

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Even Your truth, O my God*



Background

From a Christian faith-based moral perspective, a just peace for all in Palestine and Israel requires equal freedom, human rights and self-determination for the Palestinian people as well as for Israelis.

All forms of violence should come to an end. Religious affiliations should not justify the application of different moral standards for different communities. International law as an expression of justice for all peoples must be respected as a moral norm that should be implemented politically and socially. This has been expressed in several WCC policy statements and programmes over the years. As the occupation continues, resulting in human rights violations and conflicts, the WCC continues to promote the World Week of Peace for Palestine and Israel, inviting member churches, faith-based communities, and civil society organizations around the world to join together for a week of prayer for just peace for all in Palestine and Israel. Congregations and individuals around the globe who share the hope of justice are invited to unite during the week to take peaceful actions, together, to create a common international public witness.

2021 Arts for Justice and Peace initiative

There are multiple ways to promote justice and peace in situations of conflict. However, what can art do? Can there be a vital role for art and aesthetics in contributing towards justice, peace and reconciliation? By addressing key questions around the relationship between art and reconciliation, between culture and conflict, and between art, conflict, culture and community, we realize that artistic expressions of communities help us understand the multiple facets of a conflict going beyond socio-political factors.

This leads us to explore the deep potential of arts-based and creative approaches to reconciliation. Arts-based approaches have attracted increasing attention in recent years, seen as welcome alternatives to more mechanistic and institutional approaches to peacebuilding and transitional justice.

We therefore invite our constituency and friends all over the world to promote artistic expressions of



both the current situation and hopes for the future in Israel and Palestine, and through art to pave the way for creative peacebuilding initiatives.

Truth is one divine value that we all seek. Some of us choose to come and see, others read about it, but many of us witness it through paintings, lyrics, music and different artistic creative expressions.

Through cultural dances and storytelling, poems and songs, we can witness how life was before the occupation. Visit the separation wall today, read the stories and see how famous international artists (Banksy as one) portrayed truth through graffiti on the separation wall. Visit Ayda Refugee Camp and through the paintings of the refugees on the wall remember the destroyed villages of 1948 and the lives lost during the Intifadas. From the beautiful voices of young artists we can hear the cries and hope of the peoples. Go to Haifa or Bethlehem, and Gaza and you will see truth on the walls. Truth makes ugly walls crack. And voices praise the Lord and portray the truth, that God is faithful to all of us.

Prayer

Our Heavenly Father,

We thank you for all the blessings and gifts you have given us, and for all the talents you give to your people.

O Lord, despite the pain of the occupation and despite the challenges of the reality we live in,

We are looking for peace in the midst of war, killing, destruction and walls, expressing our love for the Holy Land with our brush that draws the features of peace that every Palestinian and Israeli dream of.

Plant peace in our hearts, O Lord, and make us ambassadors of your peace in a land that has not seen peace.

Accept, O Lord, our prayers in the name of our Redeemer and Saviour Jesus Christ –

Amen

