




pilgrimage
of justice
and peace

ISRAEL AND PALESTINE

The WCC has been deeply involved in efforts for peace in the Holy Land since 1948 when the state of Israel was created and the WCC formally established. Already at its first Assembly, in 1948, churches of the WCC acknowledged both the state of Israel and the right of Palestinians to a state of their own. Ever since, the WCC has maintained close relations with member churches and Christian communities in Jerusalem.

The WCC has repeatedly called for a comprehensive peace agreement that would assure the rights, well-being and security of the Israeli and Palestinian peoples. The WCC has encouraged dialogue between Christians, Jews and Muslims to promote tolerance and harmonious relationships.

From 1995 onward, the WCC focused attention on Jerusalem as a key to peace in the wider region, calling for the city to be an open city, shared between its two peoples and three faiths.

In February 2001, the WCC Central Committee called on the WCC general secretary and staff to strengthen efforts for a comprehensive peace based on justice and security for all peoples of the region. As recommended by an ecumenical delegation that subsequently visited the Holy Land in June 2001 and an August 2001 consultation of churches and ecumenical partners from the region and beyond, the WCC started an "Ecumenical campaign to End the Illegal Occupation of Palestine: Support a Just Peace in the Middle East" in 2002. The Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel also arose from this campaign.

A week of international church action for peace in Palestine and Israel, convened annually by the World Council of Churches, since 2006, mobilizes churches around the world to educate their members about the conflict, take public actions and advocate with political leaders for peace with justice.

In 2007 churches from every region of the world gathered in Amman, Jordan, to establish the Palestine Israel Ecumenical Forum. The forum's purpose is "to catalyze and co-ordinate" new and existing church advocacy for peace.



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ECUMENICAL ACCOMPANIMENT PROGRAMME IN PALESTINE AND ISRAEL



The Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI) is a programme coordinated by the WCC, founded in response to a call from the local Heads of Churches in Jerusalem, that brings internationals to the West Bank. Since 2002, over 1,700 volunteers have come for three months to be Ecumenical Accompaniers (EAs).

EAPPI contributes to mobilize and coordinate effective and principled humanitarian action in partnership with national and international actors in order to alleviate human suffering stemming from the conflict and the occupation.

The EAPPI brings Ecumenical Accompaniers to Palestine and Israel to deal with threats to life, liberty and security, forced displacement and destruction of property and livelihoods, restriction on freedom of movement and access to services and places of worship, and lack of effective remedy and accountability— thereby affirming the respect and application of human rights and international humanitarian law and UN Security Council resolutions.

EAPPI is a journey of moral and spiritual significance. It strengthens the fellowship of churches that are willing to walk together and engage in effective public witness (advocacy) for a just peace in the Holy Land.

By helping to break barriers that alienate relations between Palestinian and Israeli peoples, EAPPI promotes WCC's ecumenical vision of one human family based on justice and peace.

In the Holy land, the EAPPI office is located at the Jerusalem Inter-Church Centre (JIC), a space that provides timely and regular information, analysis and reports to the ecumenical community and strengthens local the churches' capacity for diaconal work as well as local ecumenical and inter-faith relations. The JIC is a joint project of the Jerusalem churches, the World Council of Churches (WCC) and the Middle East Council of Churches (MECC).

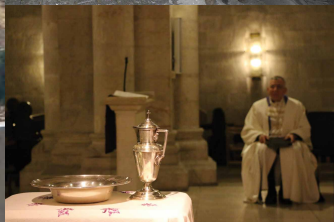


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7 WEEKS FOR WATER 2016: THIRST FOR JUSTICE



"Jerusalem is a most significant destination for the pilgrimages by people of all three faiths of the book, and a place where they live side by side. And yet, in this holy place, we have confronted a most unholy reality: the terrible suffering of the Palestinian people from lack of clean water and adequate sanitation. And what is lacking in Palestine is not water; what is lacking is justice. The Palestinian people thirst for water justice." (Statement of EWN-WCC, Jerusalem, June 2014)

The WCC's Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace has a regional focus on the Middle East in 2016. Since 2008, the Ecumenical Water Network (EWN) of World Council of Churches (WCC) has been inviting its member churches to use this season of Lent to reflect on water through its Lenten campaign called "Seven Weeks for Water".

The 2016 Lenten campaign took the WCC member churches on a pilgrimage of water justice in the Middle East, with special focus on Palestine. The Biblical and theological reflections and resources for the seven weeks were based on the water crisis in Middle East region with a justice and peace perspective.



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