

Prayer for peace

in Israel/Palestine



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As Christians we believe in a God who breaks down dividing walls of hostility between peoples, who works for reconciliation (Ephesians 2).

The leaders of churches in the Holy Land (Palestine/Israel) are gathering Saturday, August 30, in Bethlehem, to pray in anguish over very real concrete walls and barbed wire fences that not only are dividing peoples but are dispossessing tens of thousands.

For the past 18 months, the State of Israel has been vigorously building what it calls a “separation fence” (and which Palestinians call a segregation, or apartheid, wall). This barrier—in some places a concrete wall 25 feet high, in other places an imposing network of barbed wire fencing equipped with electronic sensors—is being built on land confiscated from Palestinian landowners.

The wall is separating tens of thousands of Palestinians from their water sources. The wall has meant the uprooting of over 100,000 trees. The wall means that tens of thousands of Palestinians are being separated from jobs, schools, hospitals and family. The wall means the pre-emption of a viable two-state solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

Many Israelis support the construction of the wall, believing that it will bring them security from violence. Other Israelis, however, joined by Palestinian Christians and Muslims committed to reconciliation, insist that real security will not come through walls that dispossess others, but through justice. We join the present U. S. administration in expressing deep concern about the segregation wall.

Prayer:

O God, who breaks down the walls of enmity, we give thanks that your reconciling Spirit is at work among Israeli Jews and Palestinian Christians and Muslims who work for justice and peace. We join our prayers with the prayers of the churches in Palestine/Israel against walls and fences that are segregating Palestinians from Israelis and that mean that Palestinians are separated from land and water, work and school. In the name of your Son, Jesus Christ, who has broken down the dividing wall, we pray, Amen.



Mennonite Church USA Executive Board Peace Advocate Office, 330-683-6844, SusanML@MennoniteUSA.org.—Words by Alain Epp Weaver, Mennonite Central Committee, West Bank. Graphic design by Cynthia Friesen, PJSN volunteer. August 26, 2003.

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