



MP

# OUT OF BETHLEHEM

## *A Cry*

Because of COVID 19 this Christmas will be like no other we have experienced

**Yet we will still gather to sing of Bethlehem and the birth of him who came among us with the message of justice and peace for all people.**

Because of COVID 19, this Christmas will be like many others experienced by the citizens of Bethlehem, only much worse.

The tourists who normally crowd the streets and on which their economy largely depends, will be absent.

**As they gather in the Church of the Nativity on Christmas Eve, the separation wall which imprisons them will feel more threatening than ever.**

A group of Bethlehem clergy have written to the Churches of the world in the face of the existential threat they now face.

They say:

**"The human rights of Palestinians have been violated for decades. Hope is a pillar of our faith, yet annexation could be the final straw when it comes to a viable Christian presence as well as our national aspiration to live in freedom, dignity and equality in our homeland in accordance with international law."**

**"It feels there is no life left for us here... no future for our children. My family have always lived here. But this Occupation, this violence, this suffocation, this indignity... I don't know if I can take anymore. Soon all our churches will be empty – no more Christians left in the Holy Land."**

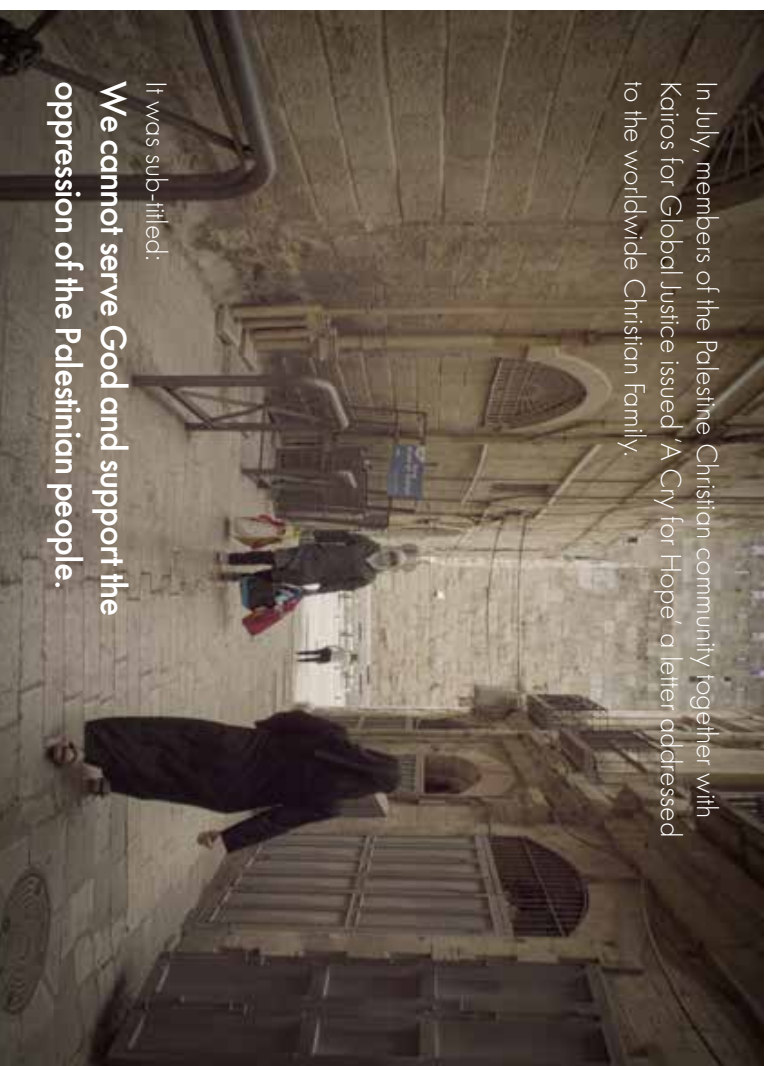
(Abu Nidal, a woodcarver from Bethlehem)



In July, members of the Palestine Christian community together with Kairos for Global Justice issued 'A Cry for Hope' a letter addressed to the worldwide Christian Family.

It was sub-titled:

**We cannot serve God and support the oppression of the Palestinian people.**



The letter is not an appeal for money.

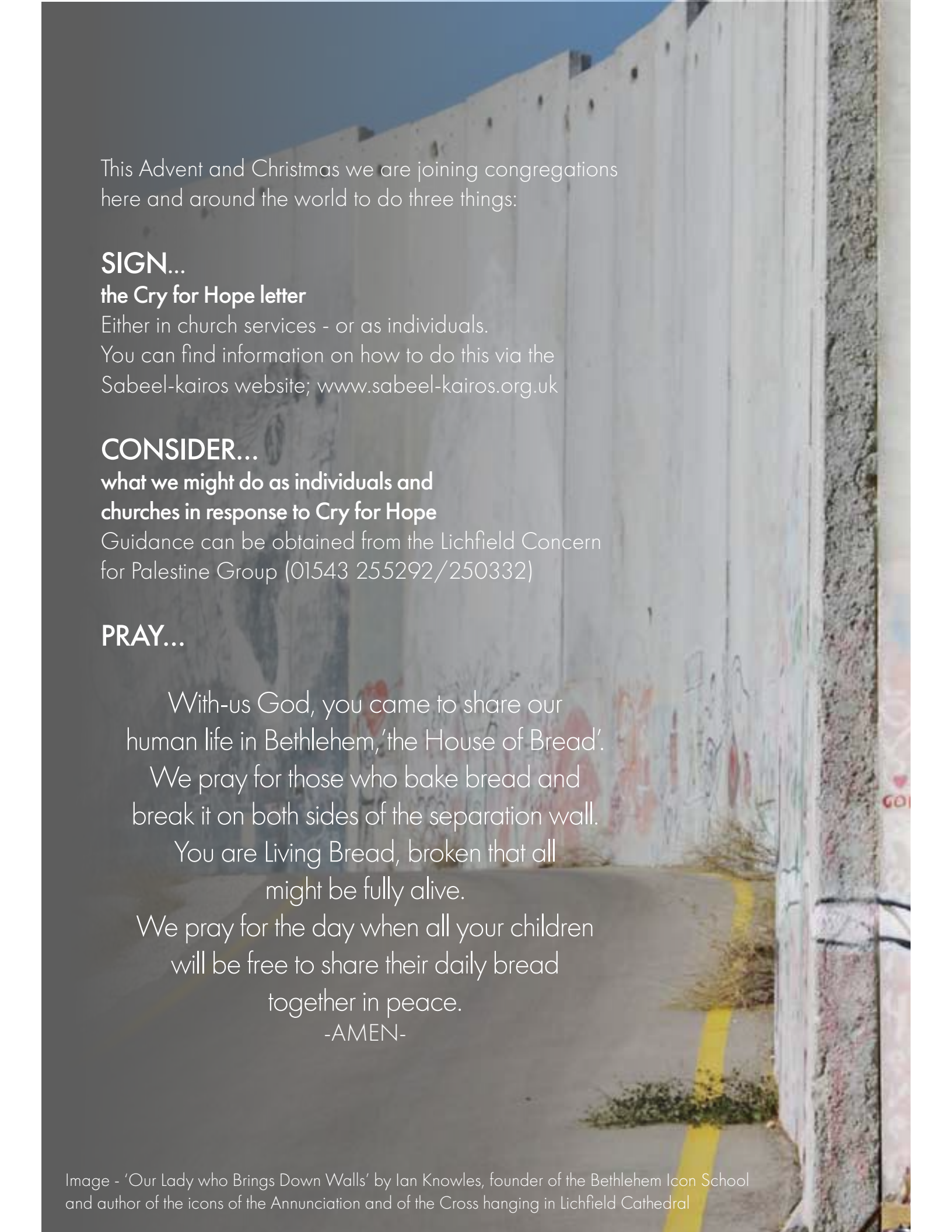
It calls for decisive action in the face of intensifying oppression and the threat of annexation of large areas of Palestinian land. The letter has been endorsed by 200 church leaders on five continents and is now seeking engaged support by Christians and churches at national and local level.

**This Advent and Christmas we are joining congregations here and around the world to do three things:**

**SIGN | CONSIDER | PRAY**

**>>> find out more >>>**





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## **SIGN...**

### **the Cry for Hope letter**

Either in church services - or as individuals.

You can find information on how to do this via the Sabeel-kairos website; [www.sabeel-kairos.org.uk](http://www.sabeel-kairos.org.uk)

## **CONSIDER...**

### **what we might do as individuals and churches in response to Cry for Hope**

Guidance can be obtained from the Lichfield Concern for Palestine Group (01543 255292/250332)

## **PRAY...**

With-us God, you came to share our human life in Bethlehem, 'the House of Bread'.

We pray for those who bake bread and break it on both sides of the separation wall.

You are Living Bread, broken that all might be fully alive.

We pray for the day when all your children will be free to share their daily bread together in peace.

-AMEN-