

“Call to U.S. Churches to Confess Our Collective Role in the Genocide of Palestinians”

***Are you interested in using this resource in your community? Let us know how you used it [here](#).*

What is this resource?

In February of 2024, at the invitation of [Sabeel](#), over 35 church leaders gathered in Jerusalem to accompany their Palestinian kin. This summer, some of those former delegates created this liturgical resource for those wanting to join the Global Church in lifting up the genocide facing Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank on the occasion of [World Communion Sunday](#) (5 October 2025). Folks are invited to adapt this work to their worshipping/prayer context.

This resource is imagined in three parts:

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Brief Theological Foundation

Palestinian Christian siblings implore us to open our eyes to their suffering. They, along with their non-Christian neighbors, are suffering unimaginable devastations in the most widely-broadcast genocide in world history. Many U.S. Christians are becoming aware of our complicity in the United States' support of these killing fields of Gaza and our need for repentance.

The painful theological reality of these times is that each time we partake of the body and blood of Christ, we are partaking in an “unworthy manner” because of this complicity. We are reminded continually that we belong to the *larger* Body of Christ, a “world communion,” and that our faith, beliefs, language, and in our case, tax dollars have consequences. Our silence, as well, has consequences.

World Communion Sunday — October 5, 2025 — provides many U.S. churches a grace-filled opportunity for U.S. Christians to “examine” ourselves as we prepare our hearts, minds, and lives to share in this global remembrance. This confessional preparation is appropriate for all churches who observe the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper (Eucharist, Holy Communion).

Brief Reflection from Jerusalem

by Omar Haramy, director of Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center

We must always be reminded that the church is for sinners — none of us are perfect, and confession is part of our ongoing discipleship. At the same time, we should also encourage gratitude for the many churches that are faithfully committed to justice and nonviolence. Our preference is to lift up the powerful witness of Christians who are courageously working for justice, and to remain in communion with them. In doing so, we can be the alternative to the complicit church.

Part One: The Week Leading Up to World Communion Sunday **Resources for Preparation**

- For those denominations whose assemblies and / or leaders have made recent statements regarding genocide, ceasefire, resumption of humanitarian aid, these could be studied and discussed, either as a study of your own denomination or a call to move your own community toward prophetic witness. These include [UCC](#), [Quakers](#), [PCUSA Stated Clerk](#), [ELCA](#), and [Unitarian Universalists](#).
- Certain denominations have [Confessions of Faith](#) that challenge allegiances to governments over Jesus Christ.
- Folks can study the [Kairos Document](#), written by Christian Palestinians in December 2009, available through Kairos Palestine.
- Folks can use this week to discuss our complicity in the genocide and ethnic cleansing of Palestinians and its consequences for taking communion this coming World Communion Sunday, according to Paul — [1 Corinthians 11:23-29](#). Use this resource’s “Brief Theological Foundation” for confession and action. (Linked [here](#).)

Part Two: World Communion Sunday

Resources for Worship

An Order of Worship for World Communion Sunday

by the Rev. Gail Doering, 2003 (updated 08/25/25)

❖ Hymns

- [O God of the Children in Gaza, We Pray](#) — *the Rev. Carolyn Winfrey Gillette*
- [We Weep for Gaza's Children](#) — *the Rev. Carolyn Winfrey Gillette.*

❖ Poem Litany — "Think of Others"

by Mahmoud Darwish, (1941-2008) Palestinian National Poet

One: As you prepare your breakfast, think of others
All: **do not forget the pigeon's food.**
One: As you conduct your wars, think of others
All: **do not forget those who seek peace.**
One: As you pay your water bill, think of others
All: **those who are nursed by clouds.**
One: As you return home, to your home, think of others
All: **do not forget the people of the camps.**
One: As you sleep and count the stars, think of others
All: **those who have nowhere to sleep.**
One: As you liberate yourself in metaphor, think of others
All: **those who have lost the right to speak.**
One: As you think of others far away, think of yourself
All: **say: "If only I were a candle in the dark."**

❖ Prayer

from [Sabeel Wave of Prayer](#)

God of the oppressed, we cry out for Gaza,
where your children endure unthinkable brutality, hunger, and death
at the hands of powers who despise mercy.
We grieve the cruelty and the indifference that cloak
genocide in hollow words, and we repent
for a world that delays justice while lives are extinguished.
Kindle in us a holy anger that will not be quiet,
and strengthen all who relentlessly labor for truth, relief, and freedom
in the face of empire.
May your judgment break the grip of oppression,

and may your mercy bring healing and life
where destruction now reigns.
Lord in your mercy...hear our prayer.

❖ Communion

➤ *Ideas for adapting your usual communion practices:*

- Include language in the Communion prayer about the suffering in Gaza and the West Bank — the body of Christ — bread — in Gaza is literally starving and being bombed; Jesus was a Palestinian.
- Explicitly refer to “world communion” including our Christian brothers and sisters in Gaza and the West Bank and all people.
- Use bread from a Palestinian or Arab store.

➤ *Liturgy examples:*

- [Communion Liturgy 11-26-23](#)

- Adapted from liturgies by [Rev. Teri Peterson](#) and by Rev. Marietta Macy

- Invitation to the Table

Jesus shared his meals with all kinds of people—doubters, believers, and skeptics; rich and poor; leaders and followers; scholars and fishermen and tax collectors, palm wavers and parade watchers.

He calls us all to come, taste, and see that God is good, that there is enough for everyone, that there is another way.

This is the table where all kinds of people, from all kinds of places, in all kinds of times, meet.

This table does not belong to the [*insert denomination*] church, or to this congregation, it belongs to Christ, and he is the one who promises to meet us here.

This is the table where we can begin a journey, where we can make a turn, where we can be strengthened for the road ahead.

So come, not because you understand, but because you want to know God more.

Come, not because you love God a lot, but because you love God a little and want to love more.

Come, not because your faith is unshakeable, but because you could use some strength for the journey.

Come, not because you are already perfect and worthy, but because it is Christ himself who invites you to share in the worldly feast.

- Great Prayers of Thanksgiving

The Lord of the World be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts to God of all.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to our welcoming God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is truly right and our greatest joy to give you thanks and praise, O God. We praise you, O God, who raised your voice and sang your Spirit over the chaos of creation to make all that is beautiful and good and precious in your sight. We rejoice in you, O God, who gave song to the prophets and melodies to the people who you saved from flood and fire and famine. From the melodies in our hearts and the songs in our souls, we give thanks and praise to our savior Jesus the Christ, who teaches us to break bread and protest starvation.

Cooing into silent nights of Bethlehem, Jesus entered the world amongst the lowly in a land called Palestine. Chanting songs of freedom, Jesus proclaimed good news to the captive. Calling forth the tombs, Jesus granted new life to people claimed by death.

Wailing and weeping, Jesus understood the stress and sorrow of a broken world. Dancing through death, Jesus invites us to proclaim life for all in death's bitter sting.

So we come to this table with deep joy and humble gratitude, for we know that:

Breaking bread, Jesus feeds us with a hunger for justice.

Pouring cup, Jesus invites us to join into the song of salvation.

Come, Holy Spirit, and stir in our hearts, for the one who called us to the table calls us to sing and dance. Teach us the music, guide us in the footsteps, empower us to join in the celebration and invite all we see to do the same. Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ, through the power of the Holy Spirit, may all glory and honor be yours, O Lord of the Dance, who taught us to pray by saying,

Our Creator who art in heaven...

■ **Words of Institution**

The night had come when Jesus was to be arrested in Jerusalem, under the olive trees of Gethsemane. But before he would give himself up, he shared a special meal with his friends.

Earlier that evening in Palestine, he and his disciples had gathered in an upper room, overlooking the city, to share the Passover meal. At that feast, he took bread, he gave thanks, broke it, and gave it to his siblings, saying *"Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you.*

Do this in remembrance of me." Somewhere across creation, a sword

has been beaten into a plowshare, the wheat has been harvested, and the bread of life broken and shared.

After they had shared the meal, he this time took the wine, he gave thanks again, poured it out, and gave it to his disciples, saying:

“Drink this, all of you; this is the cup of a new covenant, myself poured out for all for the forgiveness of sins.” Somewhere across creation a spear has been beaten into a pruning hook, the grapes have been picked, and the cup of salvation poured out and shared.

Every time you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the life, death, resurrection, and return of our savior Jesus Christ. This is a table where all are welcome because access to the Divine has no barriers or boundaries here. The table is ready.

■ **Prayer After Communion**

God of Many Names, we praise you eternally for the gift of life you have given us. It is a privilege to walk the earth with this particular community, in this exact time and place. You lived and walked among us experiencing the depths of human pain and joy, you know more than we how much we need your peace that is beyond our understanding. Grant us your wisdom and courage also to live in ways that honor your divine plan for creation, to give bread to each living being, bringing abundant life for each and every one of us free from pain, stress, and discrimination. Be with us now and always. In your many names we pray. Amen.

❖ **Following Communion**

- As people take communion, let them take a pre-made bookmark for their Bible of green, red, black, and white yarn or ribbons.

Part Three: After World Communion Sunday Service

Resources for Education and Action

For some congregations it might not be possible to devote worship time on World Communion Sunday to the issues of Palestine — genocide, apartheid, ethnic cleansing, starvation, to name some.

For others, they might want to continue the work beyond the worship setting. Organizers might be willing to create an event before or after worship that would provide activities for education and/or advocacy. Here are some very basic suggestions for those events:

Educational Activities

- Decorate the room you meet in with maps that show Israel / Palestine and the Occupation. For educational visuals, visit [Visualizing Palestine](#).
- Join the weekly [Sabeel Jerusalem weekly Bible study](#) on Thursday mornings as a group; discuss what you learned afterward.
- Provide conversation-starter resource sheets with [films](#) or [documentaries](#), [books](#), articles, [videos](#), etc.
- Invite a Palestinian speaker or someone familiar with the realities in Gaza / West Bank
- Peruse the [FOSNA resource page](#).

Advocacy Actions

- Have postcards available to write to your Congresspeople. ([Here's an example](#) to duplicate and edit for your own context.)
- Join the global call to [boycott Chevron](#) and divest from [Palantir](#). [This campaign](#) is especially for Christian communities.
- Join Friends of Sabeel North America (FOSNA) and learn of the many opportunities for advocacy; [get their weekly newsletter here](#).
- Join [Sabeel](#).
- Consider becoming an [Apartheid Free](#) community.

Interactive Activities

- [Make kites](#) for Palestine.
- Make bookmarks with Palestinian flag colors; [discuss the significance of the colors for Palestinians](#).
- Look up the closest, local Palestinian restaurant near you and host your meeting there / meet up there after an event.

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