

URGENT: PRAY AND ACT FOR GAZA

*Justice & Peace Scotland asks you to light a candle for peace
and write to your MP to end the suffering in Gaza*

As we approach two years of the war in Gaza, the suffering has become unbearable. Pope Leo XIV has described what we are witnessing as “barbarity.” A UN Commission of Inquiry has recently concluded that “Israeli authorities and Israeli security forces have committed and are continuing to commit acts of genocide against the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip” ([Israel has committed genocide in the Gaza Strip, UN Commission finds | OHCHR](#)).

As people of faith committed to dignity, solidarity and the common good, we are compelled to act. Justice & Peace Scotland is therefore encouraging all to respond in a Christian and prayerful way to the unconscionable situation in the region.

We ask you to commit to two simple steps –

- **Pray for an end to the war in Gaza** and the establishment of a just peace throughout the Holy Land.
- **Write to your MP** calling on the UK government to use all tools at their disposal to meet the following demands: end all arms sales to Israel; bring an end to the hostilities with a permanent ceasefire; ensure the return of Israelis held hostage and of missing persons; guarantee unrestricted access to life-saving food, fuel and medical supplies; and above all, make every effort to achieve a just and lasting peace that upholds the right to safety, security and self-determination for all people in Palestine and Israel.

Archbishop William Nolan, President of Justice & Peace Scotland, has urged us not to give in to despair but to unite through the power of prayer:

“We feel so helpless as we watch the death and destruction taking place in the Holy Land. But one thing we can all do is pray. Pray that the hearts of those intent on violence will soften. Pray for justice. Pray for peace.”

STEP 1 - LIGHT A PRAYER FOR PEACE

J&PS encourage churches to open - where possible - on Oct 7th to allow people to **light** a candle and say a **prayer** for justice and peace for all peoples across the Holy Land, whether Palestinian or Israeli; whether Muslim, Christian or Jew. If it is not practical for you to visit a Church on this day, please light a candle or say a prayer in your home for an end to the suffering in the region.

A prayer you may want to pray...

*God of peace and justice,
we pray for the people of the Holy Land
Israeli and Palestinian,
Jew, Christian and Muslim.*

We pray for an end to acts of violence and terror.

*We lift to you all who are fearful and hurting.
We ask for wisdom and compassion for those in leadership.
Above all, we ask that Jesus the Prince of Peace,
would bring lasting reconciliation and justice for all.
Amen.*

STEP 2 - WRITE TO YOUR MP

- Download our template letter - which you can personalise before sending - urging MPs to meet our demands - <https://www.justiceandpeacescotland.org.uk/Light-a-Prayer-for-Peace>
- To find out how to contact your local MP, click [here](#); ([Find your MP - MPs and Lords - UK Parliament](#))
- Remember to include your address and postcode to confirm that you are a constituent;
- Attach the letter as an email to your MP but, if possible, also send your letter to them by post.
- Please let us know of any responses by contacting the office email: office@justiceandpeacescotland.org.uk

Why Pray and Act for Peace?

An ever-worsening plight is being endured by the people of Gaza as the Israeli government continues to violate international law with indiscriminate bombing, mass forced displacement, the targeting of civilians and journalists, and the deliberate use of starvation as a weapon of war. Almost 65,000 Palestinians have been killed following the Hamas atrocity on 7th October 2023 that claimed 1,200 lives in Israel.

Almost half a million Palestinians now face a Level 5 “catastrophic famine”, the highest classification on the UN-backed Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) scale, the result of deliberate Israeli government restrictions on humanitarian aid entering Gaza.

The UK government continues to supply component parts for F-35 fighter jets to Israel despite evidence that these same planes are used in the bombardment of Gaza, according to Campaign Against the Arms Trade (CAAT) and Oxfam, leaving the UK potentially complicit in the violation of international law and in the death of Palestinian civilians.

Church leaders in Jerusalem have recently spoken with one voice to condemn the intolerable situation for Gazans forced to move south ahead of the Israeli ground invasion of Gaza City. “This is not the right way,” said the statement. “*There is no reason to justify the deliberate and forcible mass displacement of civilians... It seems that the Israeli government’s announcement that ‘the gates of hell will open’ is indeed taking on tragic forms.*” With more than 80% of the city’s buildings damaged or destroyed, there are few places to shelter in Gaza City yet many cannot even attempt the journey south: among those sheltering in Church compounds, for example, are the elderly, people with disabilities, women, and children - already weakened and malnourished after months of siege - for whom evacuation would be a death sentence. Read the full statement here: [Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem - Joint Statement by the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate and the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem](#).

*Now is the time to act. In prayer and in advocacy we must shine
a light in the darkness and demand an end to the suffering*