

The Gaza Bombardment of 2014: It Is Now a Year Later ...

By Rev. Diane Dulin, written in June 2015

A year has passed, and we still don't know what to call it.

Was it a war? Was it genocide? Was it carpet bombing?

We refuse to call it Israeli self-defense.

A year has passed, and still we see

buildings remain in rubble; electricity, water and services are in shambles;

over 2500 were killed and thousands injured. People still lack shelter.

Additional graves for new casualties have been dug.

A year has passed. Since then,

Congresspersons have taken paid junkets to Israel, but they have not gone to Gaza;

Dr. Mads Gilbert, long-time volunteer physician in Gaza, has been banned from return;

Nobel Laureate President Jimmy Carter has been turned away from entering Gaza;

international pledges toward rebuilding have not been paid;

another humanitarian flotilla has been turned away.

Now, a year later,

President Obama has authorized funding to replenish Israeli arsenals;

Israel has cynically sent rescue workers to Nepal while letting Gazans die;

media attention has shifted elsewhere and the curtain of invisibility has descended.

And yet, it is also true that now, a year later, through Palestinian efforts,

children whose musical instruments remain intact still make music;

youth in Gaza play soccer, create videos, do their homework and plant gardens.

Now, a year later,

Banksy has traveled to Gaza, leaving art on the crumbling walls;
neighbors have helped neighbors grieve, find shelter, celebrate birthdays;
worship has continued in mosques, churches and homes.

Within the past year,

some few have gained entrance to provide healing, inspect damage and offer hope.
Journalists both professional and amateur have sent news from Gaza to the world.
Marriages have taken place and babies have been born.

On this anniversary of bloodshed and cruelty unleashed,

we thank God for the steadfastness of Palestine;
we thank God for growing unity among the Palestinian people;
we thank God for increasing awareness by the justice-seekers of the world.

On this anniversary of bloodshed and cruelty unleashed,

we vow we won't forget and we won't give up;
we confess the responsibility that we bear as Americans;
we confess the complicity of our nation, the dishonor of our government;
we give thanks for this gathering, and for the growing movement for justice.

UNISON PRAYER:

Bring blessing to the people of Gaza, O God. Use us as those who remember, those who care, those who speak and those who take action. Deepen our own steadfast determination. Allow us to match and mirror the Palestinian insistence on life and freedom. Remind us to tell the true story of Palestine. Focus our work to restrain murderous plans supported and enabled by our own government. We labor in solidarity and we pray in hope. Amen.

Rev. Diane Dulin is United Church of Christ clergy and Kairos USA Director of Church Participation.