

THE UMKR RESPONSE



PART ONE

- UMKR & Methodist News
- Partners' News
- 2018 Resources

The annual "mega edition" of The Response is here, coming to you in two parts!

This issue is PART ONE:

1. A full review of UMKR and Methodist activities in 2018
2. A few big news stories from faith communities and other partners
3. Our picks from the most notable 2018 resources: film, print, and digital

PART TWO

will bring you the major news stories related to Israel/Palestine that caught the world's attention in 2018.

[View this newsletter as an eblast in your web browser](#)

UMKR & METHODISTS IN 2018

2018 Resolutions: Year of the Palestinian Child

UMKR activists spearheaded the adoption or renewal of 11 resolutions related to justice in Israel/Palestine in 2018. The biggest focus by far was Children: *8 of those 11 resolutions focused on the human rights of Palestinian children and their abuse in Israeli military detention.*

Some folks think that our church resolutions on social issues have little impact, especially if they are "just" actions by our regional bodies, annual conferences, rather than our denomination-wide General Conference. **Not so!**

Resolutions in the church's Annual Conferences have impacted state legislation and *can influence policies that affect the whole denomination.*

[See the article below on "Investing for BDS supporters."]

[Read the report](#)

[See resolutions and resources UMKR provided for activists this year](#)



Working together, we get their attention!

For years, UMKR has been mobilizing our supporters to make sure elected officials hear our concerns for the Palestinian people and now, for our own right to free speech. *Our action alerts have generated tens of thousands of messages sent to government leaders.*

SUCCESSFUL ACTIONS IN 2018 INCLUDE:

- **BUILDING CONGRESSIONAL OPPOSITION TO ANTI-BDS LEGISLATION** that limits our 1st Amendment rights by penalizing Americans who support a boycott targeting Israeli policy.
- **ADDING CO-SPONSORS FOR H.R. 4391**, the first bill ever on Palestinian human rights, specifically the abuse of Palestinian children in Israeli military detention.
- **RALLYING U.S. GOVERNMENT SUPPORT FOR KHAN AL AHMAR**, thereby helping to save this West Bank village continually threatened with demolition in 2018.

GET IN THE ACTION! UMKR participates in **national monthly actions** – Third Thursdays for Israel/Palestine – from the Faith Forum on Middle East Policy. *This gives our readers the chance to take action on timely issues with thousands of concerned citizens.* With the newly elected House and other big shifts in the political landscape, *we have more power than ever in 2019 to make a political impact in government.* [Sign up for UMKR email to get these alerts!](#)



UMKR & METHODISTS IN 2018

UMC Investing for BDS Supporters

UMC Investing for BDS Supporters

Wespath, the United Methodist Pension Board, manages a portfolio of over \$24 billion, including one of the top 100 pensions funds in the U.S. They now offer clergy and laity pensioners the **Social Values Choice (SVC) suite of investment funds**. These funds reflect United Methodists' support for socially responsible investing, *and they will specifically eliminate key companies that have been targeted in UMKR resolutions over several years.*

Wespath reports these funds are a response to the many resolutions adopted in UMC annual conferences calling for divestment from companies that enable and profit from the Israeli occupation – in particular, three companies: Caterpillar, Hewlett Packard and Motorola Solutions. [Read the report from the Oregon-Idaho conference](#)
[Get UMKR's Q&A and Wespath's Flyer on the SVC funds](#)



8000 Bold Women! UMKR was there

The largest gathering in the United Methodist Church takes place once every four years. Not General Conference...it's the United Methodist Women (UMW) Assembly! UMW reports that 8,000 women came to the 2018 Assembly, held May 18-20, in Columbus, Ohio.

UMKR co-chairs Rev. John Wagner and Andrea Whitmore organized a UMKR booth for education and action....UMKR had an excellent location, and our volunteers rarely had a quiet moment...Working in partnership with Rebuilding Alliance, UMKR chose a **special focus for education and action at the Assembly: the lack of electricity in Gaza...in all 270 Little Suns (solar lights) were sent to Gaza.** [Read the report](#)



May 2018, Columbus, OH – At the UMW Assembly 2018, UMKR volunteers Doug Whitmore and Rev. John Wagner (left to right) wear “Little Suns” solar lights and give UM women the chance to send this much-needed gift of light to the children of Gaza.

UMKR & METHODISTS IN 2018



Reaching "Bible belt" Christians

October 2018 – Christ at the Checkpoint conferences have been held at Bethlehem Bible College in the West Bank since 2010. *They have the unique mission of reaching out to evangelical Christians, an often neglected constituency in Israel/Palestine advocacy.* **For the first time, Christians in the United States, specifically in the American "Bible belt," were offered a similar opportunity, on October 15-18, 2018 in Oklahoma City, OK.**

UMKR and GBGM provided multi-faceted support for this ground-breaking conference, with funding, organizing and promotion, and other resources. Rev. Alex Awad – retired Palestinian clergy and UMC missionary, and UMKR Steering Committee member – was one of the major organizers and a keynote speaker at the opening plenary session.

Among the remarkable lineup of speakers, from Palestine and across the U.S., there was **Bishop Robert E. Hayes (photo)**, retired UMC bishop. Hayes described the intersections between the lives of Palestinian Christians today and his experiences as an African American in the 1960s, incorporating his knowledge of black liberation theology and his visits to Israel/Palestine. "I don't have to be Palestinian to know how it feels to be treated like that, because I experienced it in another sense. It was like a page ripped from the 1960s," he said. [Read the full report](#)
[See the CATCUSA conference website](#)



WE INTERRUPT THE NEWS FOR AN URGENT MESSAGE...



UMKR has had a REMARKABLE IMPACT on the **3rd LARGEST** church in the United States, the **12th LARGEST** in the world (we are a GLOBAL denomination).

UMKR's work has made JUSTICE in Israel/Palestine one of the **top issues** in our church.

NATIONAL CATHOLIC **REPORTER**
THE INDEPENDENT NEWS SOURCE

6 THINGS TO WATCH AT NEXT
METHODIST GENERAL CONFERENCE



As a result, The United Methodist Church was the **FIRST "mainline church" in the U.S. to DIVEST** – from G4S in June 2014.

Our work has led to other **trail-blazing church actions** that made an impact AROUND THE WORLD:

The New York Times
U.S. Church Puts 5 Israeli Banks on No-buy List

UMKR'S success comes from **dedicated volunteer activists** who do A LOT with relatively little.



BUT...



- » Unique national **conferences**,
 - » **Travel** for speakers and organizers,
 - » Professional **resources** for activists
- those things take **FUNDING**.

For UMKR to keep going this year,
we **NEED HELP** from those
who **BELIEVE** in our work.



Want to know the **BEST** way to help?
Consider a **monthly** donation!
How about \$5 or \$10 a month?
Try it out - you can cancel at any time.

WHICHEVER you like best, a **one-time or recurring gift...**
PLEASE CLICK THE GREEN BUTTON to give today!



You can donate online or by check.
Find the Green Giving button on our
website www.KairosResponse.org.

* statistics from data reported on Wikipedia

*We really can't continue this vital work for peace and justice
in Israel/Palestine without your help.*

Now, back to the news...

UMKR & METHODISTS IN 2018

UMKR & LYNC: We are stronger together

UMKR has taken an important step in the vital work of intersectional justice by joining the Love Your Neighbor Coalition (LYNC) in the United Methodist Church. Our partners in LYNC are: Affirmation, Black Methodists for Church Renewal (BMCR), Fossil Free UMC, MARCHA: Metodistas Asociados Representando la Causa Hispano-Americanos, Methodist Federation for Social Action (MFSA), Methodists in New Directions (MIND), National Federation of Asian American United Methodists (NFAAUM), Native American International Caucus (NAIC), Pacific Islanders Caucus of United Methodists (PINCUM), Reconciling Ministries Network (RMN), United Methodist Association of Ministers with Disabilities, and Western Methodist Justice Movement (WMJM).

LYNC's mission is "to assure The United Methodist Church is fully open to the presence, love and grace of God offered to all people," and **all coalition partners have agreed to work together around the intersections of common justice issues and shared values.** The broad range of issues that LYNC addresses include: colonialism and occupation, full inclusion in the church for LGBTQ people, racial justice, immigration justice, and more. **See what the coalition calls on the church to do in our [VISION STATEMENT](#).**



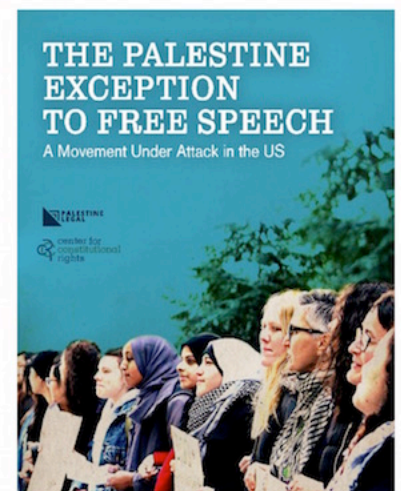
**JUST
LOVE**

Love Your Neighbor Coalition

100+ Groups to Congress: Stop IABA!

December 2015 – For years, UMKR has been fighting the **wave of anti-BDS legislation sweeping the United States, unconstitutional laws that would limit our free speech rights** and punish those who support a boycott targeting Israeli oppression of Palestinians. *We have joined with Palestine Legal and over 100 national, regional and local organizations in alerting Congress of the serious ramifications of such legislation.*

The Israel Anti-Boycott Act (IABA) has failed to pass for two years because of pressure from many human rights groups and concerned citizens who oppose the punishment of political boycott activities intended to achieve Palestinian rights. In December 2018, sponsors of the bill were attempting to *insert it into an end-of-year spending bill that would not be subject to debate on the Senate and House floors.* Our coalition's memo to Congress was updated and sent again in December, calling on Congressional leaders to make sure that didn't happen. [Get this excellent statement on anti-BDS legislation, and the ACLU's memo.](#) **EXTRA: THE PALESTINE EXCEPTION TO FREE SPEECH: A Movement Under Attack in the U.S.** [Watch the 3-minute video and get the full report](#)



UMKR & METHODISTS IN 2018

Christians Speak Truth to U.S. Power

In November 2018, the General Board of Church and Society (GBCS), joined 15 other Christian denominations and organizations in an ecumenical statement that was sent to the White House and all members of the House and the Senate. The statement focuses on alarming shifts in US policy regarding Israel/Palestine under the Trump administration, including *moving the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem, cutting vital humanitarian aid to the Palestinians, and attempting to change the legal status of Palestinian refugees* who for generations have been denied their rights under international law.

Excerpt (emphasis added):

"As Christian churches and organizations in the United States, **we strongly oppose this treatment of Palestinians.** Most Palestinians have been peacefully protesting for 70 years in the hopes of gaining international recognition and their own state. We call on people of all faiths **to stand up in support of human rights for both Palestinians and Israelis, including the right to self-determination.** We urge the Trump administration **to restore humanitarian funding** to Palestinians through bilateral assistance and UNRWA, and **to pursue engagement in honest, credible, and serious efforts** with Palestinians, Israelis, regional parties, and the international community, to seek a just resolution to the conflict."

[Read the full statement](#)



World Methodist Council honors Palestinians

The World Methodist Council (WMC) awarded the World Methodist Peace Award to the Nassar Family and their Tent of Nations program in the West Bank. The WMC represents over **80.5 million members in 80 denominations**. The award is made on the basis of courage, creativity and consistency; former recipients include Jimmy Carter and Nelson Mandela.

The Nassar family's farm is surrounded by illegal Israeli settlements which continually threaten to encroach on their land. *Denied access to power, irrigation and other essentials, the family has done remarkable work in developing an environmental and educational program known as **Tent of Nations**, bringing volunteers from around the world to work and learn on the farm.*

[Read this WMC article](#)

Read the WMC article: [Bishop Offers Hope in the Holy Land](#)

Learn more about Tent of Nations: www.tentofnations.org



August 2018, West Bank – World Methodist Council (WMC) Peace Award of 2017 is presented to Nassar family. Left to right: Gillian Kingston - VP of WMC, Rev. Kristen Brown - United Methodist missionary in Israel/Palestine, Bishop Ivan Abrahams - General Secretary of WMC, and Daoud Nassar - international spokesperson for Tent of Nations.

STATEMENTS

UMKR Condemns Israel's Response to Great March of Return

June 2018 – United Methodists for Kairos Response (UMKR) condemns without reservation Israel's deliberate killing of over 100 protesting Gazans and the maiming of thousands since protests began on 30 March 2018, Palestinian Land Day, and through the following weeks. We stand in solidarity with Palestinians and all people of conscience who call for lifting the crushing siege on Gaza that has left the people without adequate drinking water, electricity, medical supplies and other necessities, all while denying them the right to travel by land, air, or water to relieve their suffering. We cry out for justice for the people of Palestine and an end to their brutal treatment at the hands of an Israeli government that is aided and abetted, to our great shame, by some of our own governments, including the most egregious complicity of the U.S. government.

[See this statement on our website](#)



UMKR Opposes Israel's Apartheid Law



July 2018 – United Methodists for Kairos Response (UMKR) joins with [Palestinian civil society](#), [Jewish Voice for Peace](#) (JVP), the [Israel/Palestine Mission Network](#) (IPMN) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), [Palestinian Christian Alliance for Peace](#) (PCAP), and all people of conscience who decry and condemn [the recent adoption by the Israeli legislature](#) of the Nation State Law.

This bill now enshrines in Israel's Basic Law, the Israeli equivalent to a national constitution, the denial of equal rights for Palestinian Israeli citizens who comprise 20% or more of Israel's population. [Read the full press release](#)

LEADERS IN PRINT

President Trump's Vengeful Crackdown on the Palestinians

October 2018 | Washington Report on Middle East Affairs
By Alex Awad

It is an accepted fact that U.S. policy in Israel/Palestine has been pro-Israel from the days of Harry Truman's presidency all the way to Barack Obama's....However, with Donald Trump occupying the White House, a shift has taken place in U.S. policy...Whatever Binyamin Netanyahu and his far-right government ask the United States to do for them, Trump complies and hands it to them on a silver platter.

[Read the article](#)



Is the Church Committed to Middle East Peace?

May 2018 | UMKR | by Alex Awad

UMKR Steering Committee member, retired Palestinian clergy and UMC missionary Rev. Alex Awad challenges our bishops and leaders to renew what he feels has been lost: dedication to peacemaking in the Holy Land. With a review of the church's history in this role and the current urgent situation in Israel/Palestine, Awad also gives concrete suggestions for action today. [Read the letter](#)



Soccer and Settlements

February 2018 | The Hill | By Michael Yoshii

The Israeli occupation interferes in every corner of Palestinian life, including children's ability to play in their own village. A delegation from Wadi Foquin briefed U.S. congressional offices on the latest encroachments upon their lives. Mayor Ahmad Sokar stated: "We come to speak to you as Palestinians—but more importantly, we also come to speak to you as human beings. Our children and youth deserve a future just as much as any other children and youth in the world." [Read the article](#)



PARTNERS' NEWS IN 2018

Kairos Palestine 9th Anniversary Conference

Kairos Palestine 9th Anniversary Conference

On December 6-7, 2018, more than 300 people met in Bethlehem, the West Bank: Palestinian Christian leaders, representatives of Palestinian civil society, and hundreds of international Christians in the global Kairos movement and other people of faith. *Included in that body were two United Methodist Church staff who are also liaisons to the UMKR Steering Committee: Mark Harrison, Peace With Justice Director at The General Board of Church and Society (GBCS) and David Wildman, Executive Secretary for Human Rights & Racial Justice at The General Board of Global Ministries (GBGM).*

The conference issued a statement calling for these actions:

Recognize Israel as an apartheid state in terms of international law, and act with it accordingly; take a clear and the strongest theological stand against any theology or Christian group that justifies this apartheid; take a stand against religious extremism and against any attempt to create a religious state in our land or region; defend our right and duty to resist the occupation creatively and nonviolently; speak in support of economic measures that pressure Israel to embrace the way of justice and peace and stop the occupation; stand with those who speak for the right of Palestinians in response to the attacks and create lobby groups in defense of Palestinian Christians; and, to publicly and legally challenge organizations that discredit our work and legitimacy.

[See the full statement: "Hope where there is not Hope"](#)

[Get Kairos Palestine's latest study and devotional resource](#)

UMKR takes its name and guiding call to action from Kairos Palestine:

[Learn more about Kairos Palestine](#)



Episcopal Church will end complicity in Israeli occupation

July 2018 – The Episcopal Church adopted legislation to divest from the Israeli Occupation, the result of years of tireless organizing by EPF PIN (Episcopal Peace Fellowship-Palestine Israel Network). The General Convention 2018 "...directs our Executive Council's Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility to develop criteria for Israel and Palestine based on a human rights' investment screen and the actions of General Convention and Executive Council over the past seventy years..." **With this landmark action, The Episcopal Church has joined nine other U.S churches in divestment and boycott actions directed at ending the Israeli occupation.**

[Read the news in Mondoweiss](#)

[Read an EPF PIN leader's reflections on this achievement](#)

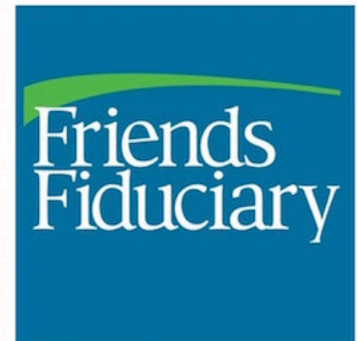


PARTNERS' NEWS IN 2018

Quakers in US expand boycott of Israeli occupation

March - 2018 – Friends Fiduciary Corporation, the Quaker investment management company with assets of \$400 million, has announced it will exclude all companies from its investments that contribute to any and all internationally recognized conflict zones and occupations – including Israel's military occupation of Palestinian lands. In 2012, Friends Fiduciary was one of the first faith-based institutions in the US to divest from the occupation, specifically from three high profile occupation profiteers: Caterpillar, Hewlett Packard and Veolia.

[Read the report from PIAG, the Palestine Israel Action Group, Ann Arbor Friends Meeting](#)



UK Quakers will not profit from Israeli occupation

November 2019 – Quakers in Britain announced that they will not invest any of their centrally held funds in companies that are profiting from Israel's occupation of Palestine, making it the first church in the United Kingdom to do so. [UMKR note: other UK churches have taken some actions of boycotting or divesting from the Israeli occupation, but have not adopted such a comprehensive policy.] In their statement: "With the occupation now in its 51st year, and with no end in near sight, we believe we have a moral duty to state publicly that we will not invest in any company profiting from the occupation."

[Read the report at Quaker.org](#)
[Read the news in Middle East Eye](#)



Presbyterians adopt 10 Israel/Palestine resolutions

June 2018 – At their General Assembly 2018, the Presbyterian Church (USA) forged ahead on many fronts for justice in Israel/Palestine. An impressive slate of legislation spearheaded by the church's Israel/Palestine Mission Network (IPMN) included:

- *Opposing anti-BDS legislation at the state and federal level*
- *Urging RE/MAX to stop facilitating sales in Israeli settlements*
- *Opposing Israel's illegal annexation of Jerusalem and its discriminatory practices against Palestinians*
- *Rejecting normalization efforts that ignore the power imbalance between Palestinians and Israelis*
- *Encouraging authentic Jewish-Christian relationships that recognize systemic inequality and are grounded in a mutual commitment to work together for justice*

• *Condemning Israel's attacks on Gaza protesters in the Great March for Return and the blockade on Gaza*

[Read the report by USCPR](#) [Read IPMN's press release](#)



theIPMN.org

PARTNERS' NEWS IN 2018

EXTRA: Get the Big Picture on Church Successes

Around the world, there are dozens of Christian denominations and institutions and other faith-based organizations that have endorsed economic actions such as boycott and divestment to end the Israeli occupation and achieve a just peace in Israel/Palestine.

See [UMKR's GLOBAL list of faith-based bodies](#) that support some form of BDS action.

"[BDS at 13: 250 US Victories](#)" at the USCPR website has details and/or links for many of the biggest BDS successes in the U.S., including in faith communities.



Three Victories for Deadly Exchange campaign

April 2018 – The City Council of Durham North Carolina voted unanimously to ban training exchanges for their police force with Israel, the first such ban in the U.S.

November 2018 – In two more, almost simultaneous firsts, both the Vermont State police and the Northampton, MA police department pulled out of a "counter-terrorism seminar" sponsored by the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) to be held in

Israel in December. Read the news at Mondoweiss: [ADL invites police forces to train in Israel](#)

Read JVP's report: [Durham Unanimously Votes for Nation's First Ban on Police Exchanges with Israel](#)



Important: What this is about

A little known source of the alarming militarization and violent tactics in American policing and immigration enforcement is widespread training with the Israeli military and police. Since the 1990's, thousands of the highest ranking police officials and law enforcement leaders across the United States have participated in exchange programs that bring together U.S. police, ICE, border patrol, and the FBI with Israeli military and police.



In these programs, "worst practices" are shared on the racist and repressive policing practices: extrajudicial executions, shoot-to-kill policies, police murders, racial profiling, massive spying and surveillance, deportation and detention, and attacks on human rights defenders. Jewish Voice for Peace, trailblazer in the U.S. movement for Palestinian rights and valued UMKR partner, is leading this campaign to alert Americans and put an end to this truly Deadly Exchange.

The Deadly Exchange website: deadlyexchange.org

See [Revealed: Deputy Director Of Ice Was Sent By The ADL For Training With The Israeli Military](#)

More about ICE: [ICE and Deadly Exchange](#)

The Truthout article: [US and Israeli Police Are Sharing Violent and Repressive Tactics](#)

PARTNERS' NEWS IN 2018

THE Seminal Conference of 2018 Makes Clear: *The Future of Justice Activism is Intersectional*

The September USCPR national conference, *Together We Rise*, brought together the most diverse lineup of presenters yet seen in the movement for Palestinian rights, put remarkable women in the limelight, and unmistakably set the intersectional path for the movement's future.

UMKR is a member organization in US Campaign for Palestinian Rights (USCPR), as are our denomination's General Board of Church and Society and General Board of Global Ministries.

Excerpts from UMKR's report:

"Many people came to this conference with high expectations for the opening keynote address on Friday, Sept 28 by renowned **Rev. Dr. William J. Barber, national co-chair of the 2018 Poor People's Campaign**....His central message focused on the belief that all people are *imago dei*, made in the image of God, and as such are deserving of equal rights and equal protection from the destructive power of empire manifested in colonialism and ethnic cleansing."

"In the Saturday evening session on Sept 29, **Congresswoman Betty McCollum (D-Minn.)** became the first sitting Member of Congress to name Israel as an apartheid state, during her speech in acceptance of USCPR's Congressional Leadership Award...."

"USCPR's entire program unmistakably demonstrated their commitment to intersectional gender, economic, environmental, cultural, religious, and racial justice....**Presenters in the plenaries and workshops throughout the weekend were overwhelmingly indigenous peoples, persons of color, queer activists, and others from marginalized communities**, with an appropriately large representation by Palestinians. *Perhaps most notable was the preponderance of women among the speakers throughout the conference.*"

"...there was another stirring event, especially for United Methodists...a Letter of Welcome written by **UMC Bishop Bruce R. Ough** described the evolution of United Methodist advocacy on Israel Palestine... "which eventually led to the managers of our [denomination's] pension funds deciding to divest from the private prison firm G4S as well as five Israeli banks that fund illegal settlements in the West Bank. As a denomination, we have also approved boycotts of products from these settlements.""

USCPR's seminal conference has clearly set the path for the future of justice activism for Palestinian rights: **our moral and strategic power will be found in our intersectional work across movements, as we embrace and unite the common struggles of diverse marginalized and oppressed communities.**"

[Read UMKR's full report](#)



PARTNERS' NEWS IN 2018



PROPHETIC ACTION: CHRISTIANS CONVENING FOR PALESTINE

SEPTEMBER 27 - 28, 2018
ST. PAUL, MN

FOSNA Conference Empowers Faith-based Organizing

Friends of Sabeel North America (FOSNA) hosted *Prophetic Action: Christians Convening for Palestine* in St. Paul, MN on Sept 27-28: a gathering of over 100 leaders and activists for Palestinian rights from across the United States who came together to explore how to strengthen local and national organizing for Palestine, with an appropriate and strong focus on church activism.

Excerpts from UMKR's report:

Reverend Traci Blackmon, a nationally renowned speaker, leader in the Black Lives Matter Movement...spoke powerfully on the treatment of people with dark skin in the United States and Palestine....Describing how these mutual struggles against oppression are characterized by those in power, Blackmon shared a story about a hunter and a lion, concluding with: "*The hunter speaks of uprising, the hunted of occupation.*"she said [people of faith] must take responsibility for the ways that their own scriptural texts are used to serve or excuse oppression.

"Another popular workshop was **No Way to Treat a Child: A Model for Congressional Advocacy**, co-presented by Linda Kateeb... and **UMKR Steering Committee member, Paula Roderick** (photo)... the NWTTC campaign spearheaded the first-ever Congressional bill for Palestinian human rights...."

[Learn more about the No Way to Treat a Child campaign.](#)

"Joining these diverse U.S. speakers was Palestinian organizer **Omar Haramy, the Administrator of the Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center in Jerusalem**, who traveled to St Paul from Palestine to present **Sabeel's ambitious new program, Kumi Now**.... weekly actions from a broad and diverse network of groups in Palestine and worldwide, including some refreshingly innovative ideas for action. *Learn more about Kumi Now, watch their introductory video, read the Bible study, and sign up to participate in the weekly worldwide action, at their website: <https://kuminow.com>.*

[Read UMKR's full report](#)



UP
RISE TOGETHER FOR JUSTICE
KUMI

PARTNERS' NEWS IN 2018

Christian Leaders declare Jerusalem must be a shared city

Historic commitments to Jerusalem as a city for two people of three faiths are being threatened, along with the hope for peace. This national conference on October 11, 2018 brought together faith leaders and justice advocates from around the country to Houston, Texas to discuss the realities that exist in Jerusalem today, the latest analyses of the situation for Palestinian Christians, as well as the prospects for peace in the aftermath of the American embassy move to Jerusalem, the massive increase in settlements in the area of Jerusalem, and Israel's new Nation-State law.

Speakers at the conference included: **Dr. Mitri Raheb**, President of Dar al-Kalima University; **Jim Wallis**, President of Sojourners; **Jim Winkler**, President of National Council of Churches (former General Secretary of the United Methodist General Board of Church and Society, 2000-2013); **Rev. Dr. Mae Cannon**, Executive Director of Churches of Middle East Peace (CMEP); **Dr. Iva Caruthers**, General Secretary of Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference; **James Zogby**, President of the Arab American Institute (AAI); and **Rev. Dr. James Forbes**, Senior Minister Emeritus of the Riverside Church.

The day culminated in an evening of Palestinian Arts and Culture at St. Paul United Methodist Church featuring music, art, culinary arts and performances by the Bright Stars of Bethlehem Dance/Theater Troupe from Palestine. Read "[Jerusalem: A city that made the Lord cry](#)", by Rev. Dr. Mitri Raheb. Read National Council of Churches President [Jim Winkler's account](#) of why faith leaders must confront injustice in Jerusalem.

Excerpts from the conference statement: Jerusalem: What makes for peace? (Emphasis added)

"The increase in the Israelization of East Jerusalem, the move to annex major settlements within the Jerusalem Municipality, and new Israeli Jewish Nation-state Basic Law are in direct defiance of International law and threaten the vision for an inclusive and shared Jerusalem."

"Thus, together with all churches in the Holy Land we continue to advocate for **Jerusalem as an open and shared city for two peoples and three faiths** based on equality and mutuality, a cosmopolitan city with an international dimension as well."

"As US Christian leaders, gathered together at this Jerusalem Conference, we:

"Urge our President and his administration to **recognize East Jerusalem as the Capital of the State of Palestine....**"

"Urge the US Congress to **support international laws and reaffirm the critical role of the United Nations....**"

"Call on commercial, governmental, and non-governmental actors— **including faith groups and churches--to exert economic leverage** to end unfair and unjust practices and policies that violate international laws...."

"Educate our constituencies regarding the **damaging consequences of premillennial dispensationalist theology (Christian Zionism)** and fundamentalist Christian teachings that create obstacles to peace...."

[Read the full statement](#)



RESOURCES IN 2018

PRINT

Why Palestine Matters: The Struggle to End Colonialism

From Israel/Palestine Mission Network, Presbyterian Church (USA)

This long-anticipated and much-needed book from IPMN presents the liberation struggle of the Palestinian people within the context of other global justice struggles. With a foreword by Richard Falk, former UN Special Rapporteur of Human Rights in the Palestinian Territories, the book is grounded in international law and brings Palestine into focus through a lens of intersectionality.

Theologian Walter Brueggemann:

"This important book summons us to a new awareness that carries with it a mandate to policies and actions that bespeak compassion and embody restorative justice." At this book's website:

[learn more, see the discussion guide, get the book.](#)

Be sure to check the menu under "MORE" for great videos.

Love their intersectionality poster! » **"The tendency has been to consider Palestine a separate—and unfortunately too often marginal—issue. This is precisely the moment to encourage everyone who believes in equality and justice to join the call for a free Palestine."** Angela Davis, *Freedom Is a Constant Struggle*, 2016



WHY PALESTINE MATTERS
THE STRUGGLE TO END COLONIALISM



The Heart of It: Messaging for the Palestinian freedom movement

One of the best and clearest resources we've seen for activists who are communicators – and who doesn't communicate? – this handbook has been updated for the current political moment.

The key principles it presents in simple language with helpful examples:

1. Keep it simple,
2. Bring people in,
3. Lead with shared values,
4. Describe what you seek, not just what you oppose,
5. Be proactive, not reactive, and
6. Know your audience/platform

[Get this resource](#)

The heart of it

Messaging for the Palestinian freedom movement

RESOURCES IN 2018

PRINT

FAQS about Israeli-Palestinian Issues and US Policy

From US Campaign for Palestinian Rights (US CPR)

This excellent resource helps to clarify common misconceptions about Palestine/Israel and identify key issues in US policy. Find answers to such questions as: • Isn't Israel the only democracy in the Middle East? • Will a two-state resolution—the establishment of a Palestinian state—resolve the Israeli-Palestinian issue? • Doesn't Israel have a right to exist and wouldn't a one-state resolution deny this right? • Didn't Trump simply recognize the reality that Jerusalem is Israel's capital? • Why are people boycotting for Palestinian rights and should the United States try to stop it?

[Get this resource](#)



US Campaign for
Palestinian Rights

A national coalition of hundreds of groups working
together for freedom, justice, and equality.

Frequently Asked Questions about Israeli-Palestinian Issues and US Policy

The issue of Palestine/Israel is one of freedom, justice, and equality. Since the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 and its subsequent displacement of more than 750,000 Palestinians, the Israeli state has maintained a separate-and-unequal regime, with one system for Israeli Jews and a matrix of control and domination for Palestinians. This separate-and-unequal regime is characterized by the violent theft of Palestinian land and resources, racial profiling, targeting of civilians, mass incarceration, the denial of return for Palestinian refugees, military occupation for Palestinians in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and Gaza Strip, and relegating Palestinian citizens of Israel to a second-class status. The following FAQs aim to clarify common misconceptions about the currently reality in Palestine/Israel, as well as relevant US policy issues.

1. Isn't Israel the only democracy in the Middle East?

Quick Facts: Jerusalem

From IMEU: Institute for Middle East Understanding
Trump's fateful decision to move the U.S. Embassy put Jerusalem much in the news in 2018. IMEU's Fact Sheet succinctly provides basic info to understand the legal and justice issues surrounding this divided city.

[Get the facts on Jerusalem](#)



EXTRA: IMEU has a treasure trove of useful resources

In their Fact Sheets, they just added [Palestine: 2018 in Review](#).

Other topics include: "The Crisis in Gaza" and "50 Years of Military Rule, 70 Years of Dispossession"

[See more of the IMEU Fact Sheets](#)

[See also IMEU's great "Palestine 101" resources for learning and activism.](#)

Topics include: Nakba & Refugees, Settlements, Activism, Palestinian Citizens of Israel, Palestinian Christians, U.S. Role, West Bank, Gaza, and Jerusalem

RESOURCES IN 2018

PRINT

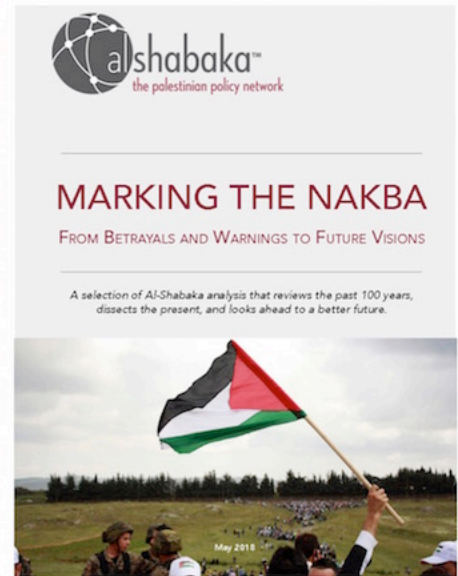
MARKING THE NAKBA: From Betrayals and Warnings to Future Visions

From Al-Shabaka, The Palestinian Policy Network

In four packed chapters (91 pp), this Palestinian think tank – ranked among the best in the world – gives us a valuable collection of their cutting-edge analysis: *reviewing the past 100 years, dissecting the present, and looking ahead to a better future.*

From the Introduction (emphasis added): "The brutal, decades-long fallout of the Nakba has its roots in the original Zionist project to build a Jewish state in Palestine shaped at the first Zionist Congress in Basel in 1897 and given an imperial imprimatur by Britain in 1917. **There was more than one strand of Zionism in the early days but the one that prevailed was the settler colonial model that has had as its goal the displacement of the majority of the indigenous people**, as is clear from a plethora of Zionist statements and texts. This goal was accomplished in the 78% of mandate Palestine that became Israel in 1948 and is being carried out today in the OPT [Occupied Palestinian Territories]."

[Get this free book now](#), and enjoy one eye-opening essay at a time, your Palestine "primer" for 2019



VISUAL

South Africa and Palestine: Striking Parallels

From Visualizing Palestine

Not content with "a picture is worth a thousand words," Visualizing Palestine combines pictures AND words to bring home essential facts about life for Palestinians in more powerful ways. In 2018, they produced several more of their popular informational graphics. *The one we've featured is the Summary in a collection of 6 graphics showing striking similarities between Apartheid policies in Israel today and South Africa in the past. See and download the Apartheid graphics. Check out the other graphics at their site - they can be kind of addictive!*



RESOURCES IN 2018

WEBSITES

ChristianZionism.org

This valuable website examines and challenges the teachings of Christian Zionism in an easily accessible question-and-answer format. Explore such questions as: *Is contemporary Israel the fulfillment of Biblical prophecy? Are the Jewish people God's chosen people today? Has God promised the land of Palestine exclusively to the Jewish people as an everlasting inheritance? How should Christians view the Palestinians and especially the Palestinian church?* Excerpts from [About Us](#) (emphasis added): "We are professors, pastors, leaders of church-related organizations, and laity all working together toward one purpose: to examine a theological teaching called Christian Zionism...many want to **wed politics to our Christian faith and apply it to the Middle East. This concerns us....We hope that this website will help other Christians navigate these currents....**" [Discover this website](#)



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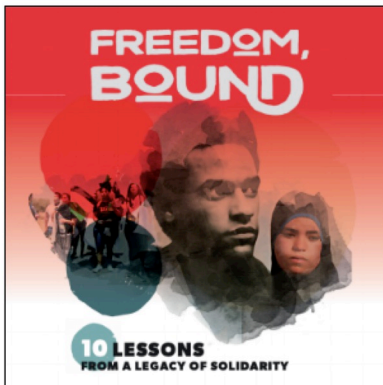
RESOURCES IN 2018

WEBSITES

AdalahJusticeProject.org

Adalah Justice Project is a Palestinian advocacy organization that can transform American perception, policy and practice. The Project presents **key human rights issues for the Palestinian citizens of Israel, connects Palestine/Israel to other social justice movements, and builds power across movements.**

This website has a strong focus on Intersectional/Solidarity justice work, to **"de-exceptionalize" Palestine/Israel** and counter the *"tendency to separate the Palestinian struggle from other movements for justice, or to characterize Israel as a wholly unique historical and legal regime."*



In their menu, see LEARN where you can connect to [Freedom, Bound](#) and a gallery for **10 Lessons Learned from a Legacy of Solidarity** - significant moments from decades of *transnational Black-Palestinian solidarity*.

Check out the report on Netroots Nation 2018:

[Demanding Political Coherence of the Left](#): *"If you're not progressive on Palestine, you're not progressive. If you're not progressive on queer rights, you're not progressive. If you're not progressive on Black lives, you're not progressive."* There's a lot to explore at adalahjusticeproject.org/

RESOURCES IN 2018

FILM & VIDEO

Gaza: Can you imagine?

From IMEU: Institute for Middle East Understanding; 90 seconds
Really short and really powerful! Use this video to introduce people to the unimaginable living conditions in Gaza, which the UN has said will become unlivable by 2020 (and many have said that day has already arrived): a humanitarian catastrophe that is growing worse every day as the world allows it to continue.

[See it on Youtube](#)



The Danger of Neutrality

TEDxTalk, 11 mins

Staying neutral in controversial situations is the moral high ground, right? Wrong. It's the exact opposite. Author and inspirational speaker Anna Baltzer explains how neutrality is a dangerous trap -- and an illusion. **Taking a side, not impartiality, is what really helps resolve conflicts.** Framing her message in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Baltzer shares how taking a side is the best thing that can happen to us. Not only is it the right thing to do, but our own liberation depends on it.

Anna Baltzer is an award-winning author and the Director of Organizing & Advocacy at the US Campaign for Palestinian Rights (USCPR), who has lectured at more than 500 universities, churches, parliaments, and policy institutes on five continents and is quoted widely in the U.S. and international press. [Watch it on Youtube](#)



RESOURCES IN 2018

FILM & VIDEO

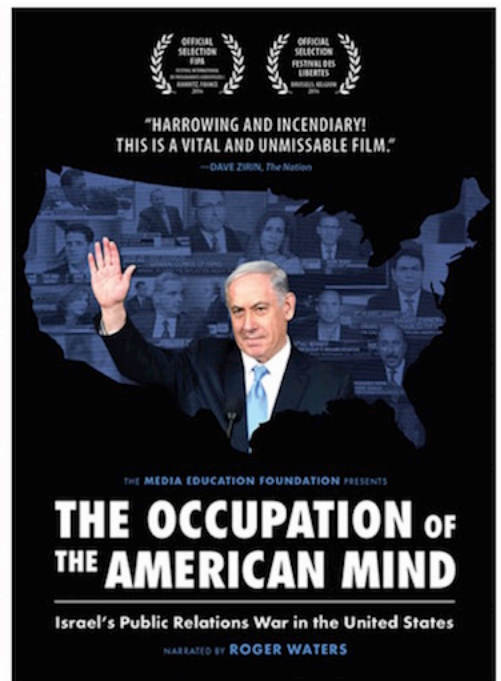
The Occupation of the American Mind: *Israel's Public Relations War in the United States*

From the Media Education Foundation;
in 3 lengths: 84 mins, 45 mins, or 21 mins

The most acclaimed (and attacked) film on Israel/Palestine in recent years reveals the devastating public relations war that Israel has been waging in the U.S. for decades: a stunning exposé of how the Israeli government, US government, and Israel Lobby have shaped American media coverage, to minimize the occupation, vilify critics of Israel, and dehumanize the Palestinian people. In addition, *this film also educates viewers about Israel's dispossession and occupation of Palestinian land.*

In 2018, the producers gave the world a gift: **WE CAN NOW WATCH THIS FILM FOR FREE!** Don't have time for the full length (84 mins)? They also have **SHORTER VERSIONS**: 45 mins and 21 mins. [Learn more and watch the film here](#)

EXTRA: Use this excellent film for a discussion group in your community or congregation! Scroll down their website page to find a **DISCUSSION GUIDE**, in "Screening Resources."



"Compelling, revealing, and chilling. Not only demonstrates how 'hasbara' - Israeli propaganda - became American common sense, but it offers one of the best accounts of Israel's violent dispossession and occupation of Palestinian lands.

For over half a century, Americans drank the Kool-Aid....This film is the antidote."

~ Robin D. G. Kelley, author of Freedom Dreams: The Black Radical Imagination

"Harrowing and incendiary! A vital and unmissable film."

~ Dave Zirin, The Nation

"Why is Israel/Palestine the world's most intractable conflict?...U.S. public support for the Israeli occupation of Palestine. This incisive film explains how Israeli public relations and a compliant U.S. media keep the American people confused and co-opted...."

~ Robert Jensen, Journalism, University of Texas

"A film that demands to be seen! It shows, with devastating precision, how effective propaganda can hide crimes that are epic in scale and have catastrophic consequences."

~ Ken Loach, award-winning filmmaker

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Or go to our website and see the green Giving button at the top right corner: KairosResponse.org

On our donation page, you will also find a mailing address for checks.

UMKR is an international grassroots peace movement of laity and clergy in the United Methodist Church. We are responding to the Palestinian Christians' urgent call, in *Kairos Palestine: A Moment of Truth*, for effective action to end the Israeli occupation and achieve a just peace in the Holy Land.

UMKR seeks – through nonviolent action and in partnership with our Palestinian sisters and brothers in Christ – freedom, justice and equality for all Palestinians and Israelis.

[Learn more about UMKR](#)

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