



October 2024

Dear family in Christ –

On Saturday, the [General Council affirmed](#) the continued application of the Justice Principles to the advocacy work of The United Church of Canada, by passing GCE 10 Authorizing Action for a Principle-Based Approach to Justice Work in the United Church of Canada with Regards to Palestine-Israel.*

In doing this, the Council directed the General Secretary to continue reporting on the advocacy work related to Palestine and Israel, to the Executive of the General Council. How the justice principles are applied in the advocacy is a key part of the reporting.

The Council also affirmed applying the principles in considering other advocacy strategies. Proposals GCE04, CS01, SW09, FSL01, PM02, RC1501, SW02 Peace in Palestine and Israel, and NEW04 Join the Apartheid Free Communities Movement, will be referred to the General Secretary for application of the principles. Other strategies could include joining:

- the Boycott, Divestment and Sanction (BDS) movement;
- the Apartheid-Free Communities movement;
- the international human rights community in recognizing and rejecting Israel's apartheid system of laws and legal procedures towards the Palestinian people.

We, as people of faith who are followers of Jesus, and called to transforming discipleship are called to uphold the voices of partners who are part of the communities most impacted in the region – Palestinian and Jewish – by expecting our government to do all in its power to ensure a just peace in the region. Isaiah speaks of the results of living a holy obedient life, and one that is focused on helping those who are in need:

The Lord will always lead you, satisfy you in a parched land, and strengthen your bones. You will be like a watered garden and like a spring whose waters never run dry.

We are obligated, in Canada and globally, under international law to work towards an end to the injustices underlying the violence.

Violations of human rights violate of the dignity of all people. *A Song of Faith* reminds us that God

*calls us to protect the vulnerable,
to pray for deliverance from evil,*

*to work with God for the healing of the world,
that all might have abundant life.*

Please pray and act for a just peace

God, we know that true change begins within each of us. Help us to not be complicit with oppression; rather, guide us as we examine our own hearts, to confront our own prejudices and unconscious biases.

May we, as a society, recognize the inherent worth and dignity of every individual, celebrating that our diversity can bring us closer together.

Grant us the courage to forgive others as we forgive ourselves, to learn from the ignorance of our past;

—From [For the Healing of Wounds Inflicted by Racism](#), written by Sarah Yang

*Like an olive tree planted by water,
sending out its roots by the stream,
may our commitment toward a just peace in Israel and Palestine never falter,
may our hope not be uprooted,
may our actions bear good fruit,
may our love be steadfast.
Until freedom and justice for all comes.
May it be so. Amen.*

We live in hope.

The Right Rev. Dr. Carmen Lansdowne, Moderator
The United Church of Canada

*Recommendations passed by the General Council:

- a. affirm that the application of the Principles allows for the adoption of the strategies of Boycott, Divestment and Sanction(BDS) Movement and the ability to respond positively to the request of New 01 - Join the Apartheid Free Communities Movement (Proposal received by the Executive of General Council May 10-11, 2024), joining the consensus of the international human rights community in recognizing and rejecting Israel's apartheid system of laws and legal procedures towards the Palestinian people and refer proposals GCE04, CS01, SW09, FSL01, PM02, RC1501, SW02 Peace in Palestine and Israel to the General Secretary as part of the process to guide the church's response.
- b. direct the General Secretary to continue to report to the Executive of General Council on the advocacy work related to Palestine and Israel and how the principles were applied, and to provide any learning to the Theology Inter-Church Interfaith Committee.

GCE 10 can be found at commons.united-church.ca / Governance / 44th General Council / 2024-10 Annual Meeting / Proposals.

All other proposals referred to can be found at commons.united-church.ca / Governance / 44th General Council / 2024-10 Annual Meeting / Background Documentation.