



Sabeel Wave of Prayer

January 2nd 2020

This prayer ministry enables local and international friends of Sabeel to pray over regional concerns on a weekly basis. Sent to Sabeel's network of supporters, the prayer is used in services around the world and during Sabeel's Thursday Communion service; as each community in its respective time zone lifts these concerns in prayer at noon every Thursday, this "wave of prayer" washes over the world.

Thirty-nine Palestinian civilians, including 11 children and a woman, were shot and injured by Israeli occupation forces' (IOF) fire against mainly peaceful protestors at the 86th Great March of Return in the eastern Gaza Strip, on Friday, 27th December 2019. The organisers of the demonstrations have decided to halt all demonstrations until the 30th March 2020 and from then on only hold monthly demonstrations. This decision was taken mainly due to concern about the vast number of injuries overstressing Gaza hospitals and progress in talks with the Israeli administration.

- **Dear Lord, we continue to pray for those injured and killed as they demonstrate for the right to return to their ancestral lands. We pray for progress in talks which move towards justice and peace for all. Lord, in your mercy...*hear our prayer.***

The Kumi Now initiative focuses on the work of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land, (ELCJHL). The ELCJHL is working to encourage Palestinian Christians to stay in the Holy Land, many have emigrated to the diaspora. The lack of freedom and security experienced by Christians under the Israeli occupation is forcing many Christian families to leave. The ELCJHL supports seven churches and four Lutheran schools, educating some three thousand students. They educate Christians and Muslim students side by side and have a strong ethos of teaching tolerance and peacebuilding.

- **Lord, we thank you for the witness of the Lutheran church and schools in the Holy Land. We pray for the pastors and teachers in their work to promote peace and justice among those they serve. God of peace, we pray you will rain peace on the Holy Land. Lord, in your mercy...*hear our prayer.***

As the New Year and decade dawn, the political situation in Palestine/Israel continues to appear uncertain. Israeli elections will be held again in springtime with hopes that Palestinian Authority elections will also be held soon. Many hope for change and yet signs of an end to the Israeli occupation appear few and far between.

- **Lord, we cry out to you and pray for those who suffer under the oppression of the military occupation in Palestine. We remember the refugees, the prisoners, the dispossessed, and the homeless. We pray that international lawmakers will bring pressure to bear on the Israeli government to bring about change in the Holy Land. Lord, in your mercy...*hear our prayer.***

There has been a recent widespread outbreak of influenza in Israel. Eleven people have died, and nearly one hundred others have been hospitalised due to complications caused by the flu virus.

- **Lord, we pray for the families who have lost loved ones as a result of this flu outbreak. We pray for those who are suffering in hospital that they may soon recover. Lord, in your mercy...*hear our prayer.***

Thousands of Christian pilgrims flocked to Bethlehem to take part in the Christmas Eve celebrations in Manger Square and at the Church of the Nativity. The Palestinian Tourism Minister estimated that nearly 15,000 pilgrims stayed overnight in the hotels in Bethlehem.

- **Lord, we pray for the people of Bethlehem. We are encouraged that so many pilgrims are coming to visit the birthplace of Jesus. At the same time, we know that so many local Christians have been forced to leave their native town as conditions are so hard under the occupation. They face checkpoints, permits, a separation wall, economic hardship and intimidation. We pray for our brothers and sisters that they may keep their hope in God and other people, despite the pain and problems they face. Lord, in your mercy...*hear our prayer.***
- **We join with the World Council of Churches in their prayers for the countries of Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, and Palestine. Lord, in your mercy...*hear our prayer.***