



Sabeel Wave of Prayer

May 9th, 2024

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.

Israel's military has ordered Palestinians to move out of eastern Rafah, warning it is about to use extreme force. The consequences of an invasion in Rafah would be catastrophic. 1.4 million Palestinians have been sheltering in Rafah and half of them are children, most of whom have already been displaced. All eyes on Rafah.

- **God of the oppressed, you know what it is like to seek refuge from the power of the empire. We ask you to protect the people sheltering in Rafah, many of whom have been displaced several times. Lord, ensure the people in Rafah that even if they are displaced, killed, and tortured that your love to them is unbreakable since, "he will never leave you nor forsake you" (Deuteronomy 31:6).**

Lord in your mercy... hear our prayer

On April 30th, the United General Conference of The United Methodist Church made a groundbreaking call for church investment managers to exclude the bonds of three countries – Israel, Turkey, and Morocco – that are holding subject populations under prolonged military occupation. Furthermore, certain public actions were declared to struggle for justice and peace in Palestine and to answer the cries of the Palestinian Christian community.

- **God of hope, we are thankful for the efforts of the United Methodist Church to struggle for justice, peace, and truth. We pray that these statements and actions will encourage more Churches around the world to be witnesses to the God of the poor and the weak.**

Lord in your mercy... hear our prayer

On the 5th of May, Israel shut down Al Jazeera's operations in the country and seized some of its communication equipment, prompting condemnation from the United Nations and rights groups over Israel's restriction of press freedoms. This is yet another assault by Israel on the freedom of press since the 7th of October.

- **God of truth, we thank all journalists who have given a voice to the voiceless and have given the world a glimpse of dark realities. We remember that, "everyone who does evil hates the light and will not come into the light for fear that their deeds will be exposed"**

(John 3:20). Lord, ensure that truth and freedom of press will be restored so that liberation, justice, and peace can be achieved.

Lord in your mercy... hear our prayer

On Thursday the 9th of May, Sabeel will be holding a special joint English and Arabic zoom service titled “Hope in the Midst of Hopelessness: Orthodox Easter & Ascension Day”. This service marks Ascension Day for the Western Church and Easter for the Eastern Church and will include reflections from Rev. Dr. Naim Ateek, Patriarch Emeritus Michel Sabbah, and Archbishop Atallah Hanna.

• God of love, we thank you for the leadership and actions of Rev. Dr. Naim Ateek, Patriarch Emeritus Michel Sabbah, and Archbishop Atallah Hanna who are part of the prophetic tradition of Palestinian Christianity. Lord, illuminate that your ascension, resurrection, and triumph happened brings good news with the oppressed and those crucified by the empire. Help us understand that if we are to be witnesses to your resurrection and ascension in our land, we ought to descend to the depths of suffering of the Palestinian people and proclaim liberation and peace.

Lord in your mercy... hear our prayer

On the 4th of May, Palestinian Christians and the Orthodox Christian world marked Sabt al-Nour, which symbolizes Christ’s victory when he descended to hell. Whilst the origins of Sabt al-Nour are unknown, the day has become an indigenous Palestinian Christian practice potent with meanings of faith, justice, liberation, and victory. Sadly, the day was tainted with Israeli police violence which injured one of the Sabeel staff who attempted to receive the Holy Fire. Moreover, for the first time in history, the Holy Fire did not reach those celebrating in Gaza.

• God of light, ignite in us a Holy Fire which consumes any impurities, fears, self-doubt, pride, so we may bear witness to the living Christ. Lord, remind us not to focus on the tomb of Christ, for it is empty, but focus on the mission to spread the liberating fire of the Holy Spirit, even if there are checkpoints and empires in our way.

Lord in your mercy... hear our prayer

The mass student protests in the United States are continuing. Despite facing detention, suspension, arrest, and other punishments, thousands of students have remained steadfast in their demands for a ceasefire, divestment from Israeli universities and companies that profit from the Israeli occupation, and the end of Palestinian oppression. In response, students have been met with military-style crackdowns and assault from Zionist groups.

• Divine creator, we thank you for the students who are acting as good Samaritans working to end Palestinian suffering. Lord, give discernment to these protestors to continue keeping the people in Gaza the focus of the movement and not succumb to the pressures of those attempting to of derail their cause. Lord, block any attempt to disrupt the demands of the students whether by slander or violence and keep the movement going which is shaking up the world.

Lord in your mercy... hear our prayer

● **We join with the World Council of Churches in their prayer for the countries of India, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka.**

Lord in your mercy... hear our prayer