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ISRAEL/PALESTINE MISSION NETWORK *of the* PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, U.S.A.  
*peacemaking through partnerships, education, and advocacy*

September 2018

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World Mission, PC(USA)

Greetings,

In 2006, fresh from my first PC(USA) justice trip to Palestine, I attended the fall organizational/planning meeting for a mission network that had been created by action of the 216<sup>th</sup> General Assembly in 2004. I felt humbled by the company I kept that weekend: people representing thousands of hours of justice work on the ground in Palestine. I thought I had learned a lot on the trip. I learned even more from those present at the conference. Somehow that weekend I became the chairperson of the new advocacy committee, and then had to go learn what an advocate actually did. When we left that meeting, we had a structure and the beginning of an action plan. For the next 12 years we forged ahead for the sake of a Just Peace in Palestine.

In over a decade the work has continued and the issues have not substantively changed. The struggle for human dignity and justice never does. But the context has shifted considerably and the big tent of justice seekers has gotten bigger.

We have known for quite some time now that the Israel Palestine Mission Network is in need of reimagining and refreshing. What served us well at our inception needs to be examined anew that we may determine how we move forward in the years ahead. I remember well how in 2006 our ecumenical and interfaith footprint was very small and we pretty much found ourselves doing our denominational thing almost exclusively. It is now very apparent that justice churches like ours are no longer islands unto themselves. We constantly interface with ecumenical, interfaith and secular bodies and organizations. Those of us who began this network are now over a decade older, and new voices and energy have come into our midst. Our structure and program needs to reflect this vitality.

It will be an honor to have former Co-Moderator of the 222<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly, and the new Coordinator for Racial and Intercultural Justice for the Presbyterian Mission Agency, The Rev. Denise Anderson, as our facilitator for this year's annual meeting in Atlanta on November 1-3. She will help us explore who we as a network are, and are yet to become!

Although this year's gathering will remind some of us of those heady days in 2006 when we were forging a new path in the PC(USA), it will also feature those important elements we have come to value in our connectedness and fellowship as a network. Most importantly, we need the collective wisdom and dreaming capacity of all who have been dedicated to this cause for over a decade, and for those who have joined with us more recently. I hope you will make room in your schedule because this year we need you more than ever!

Peace and Grace,

Rev. Dr. Jeffrey DeYoe, Moderator