



THE ISRAEL/PALESTINE MISSION NETWORK
of the PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)
www.theIPMN.org

IPMN

The First 10 Years!

A work in progress...

Mission Statement

In joyful obedience to the call of Christ, and in solidarity with churches and our other partners in the Middle East, this network covenants to engage, consolidate, nourish, and channel the energy in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) toward the goal of a just peace in Israel/Palestine by facilitating education, promoting partnerships, and coordinating advocacy. Our network speaks TO the Church not FOR the Church.

Membership

- Started in 2004 after GA mandate; first meeting in fall 2004
- 500 members and affiliates
- email blast list 1300+
- 80+ presbyteries represented
- List (400-500) who will respond to advocacy actions
- Elected leadership team of 14 called Steering Committee; 13 presbyteries represented
- Annual meetings; 60 – 70 in attendance (2009-2011); over 100 in attendance (2012-2014)
- Pledges and contributions accepted only from PCUSA members

Finances

- ◆ PC(USA) receives, disburses, and accounts for all funds.
- ◆ The annual funding campaigns have raised approximately \$370,000 in 8 years, which has funded contributions to mission personnel and grants or been designated for education and advocacy initiatives related to justice and human rights for Palestinians and promoting just peace between Israelis and Palestinians according to the mandate given IPMN by the General Assembly
- ◆ Annual funding campaign – 1/3 to IPMN program; 1/3 to mission personnel in I/P (Doug Dicks and Kate Taber); 1/3 to partners or programs in the region

2007 – 2008

- ▶ Just Peace Campaign
- ▶ Goal: \$55,000 Actual: \$61,000

Grants:

- Anglican Diocese hospitals in Nablus and Gaza
- Atfaluna Society for the Deaf in Gaza
- Palestine Children's Relief Foundation

2008 – 2009

- ▶ Half Again Campaign
- ▶ Goal: \$30,000 Actual: \$40,000

Grants:

- St. Luke's Hospital in Nablus
- Center for Jewish-Christian Relations/Youth Program
- B'Tselem

2009 – 2010

- ▶ Steadfast Hope Campaign
- ▶ Goal: \$45,000 Actual: \$49,000

Grants:

- Playgrounds for Palestine
- Center for Traumatized Children in Bethlehem
- Anglican and Lutheran Bishops' scholarship funds (in honor of Victor Makari's retirement)

2010 – 2011

- ▶ Sustaining the Hope Campaign
- ▶ Goal: \$36,000 Actual: Exceeded

Grants:

- Aid to the Aged (ATTA) of the Arab Orthodox Women's Society

(cont.)

- St. Andrew's Clinic in Ramallah
- Micro-lending organization through American Friends of Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem

2011 – 2012

- ▶ Now More Than Ever Campaign
- ▶ Goal: \$42,000 Actual: \$45,000

Grants:

- YWCA of Palestine
- The mission of the American Friends of the Diocese of Jerusalem for technological and communication training in a Middle School.
- The Workers Advice Center to support workers and jobless clients
- The Vision Association for Culture and Arts in Bethany to teach native dance classes.

2012 – 2013

- ▶ Double Down for Divestment in Detroit
- ▶ Goal: \$60,000 Actual: \$65,000

Grants:

- In His Steps Breast Cancer project
- HCEF Birzeit Senior Citizens Center kitchen project
- Kairos USA for grassroots education and advocacy initiative

2013 – 2014

- ▶ Double Down for Divestment II
- ▶ Goal: \$60,000 Actual: \$70,000

(2014 recipients will be announced at 2014 meeting.)

Education

- The Education Committee seeks to educate Presbyterians about the facts on the ground in Israel-Palestine and to remind the Church of the historical role our denomination has played working for social justice and human rights in the Middle East and throughout the world. The committee prepares publications, short fact sheets, and materials for the IPMN web site. It also produces educational materials that go to commissioners and delegates to PC (USA) biennial General Assembly.
- In the last eight years IPMN has undergone a steep learning curve as its members and leadership have learned about the history and current facts on the

ground in Israel-Palestine and have evaluated competing narratives regarding the Israeli occupation of Palestine. Through hundreds of trips to Palestine-Israel taken by IPMN members and the work of Israeli, Palestinian, and worldwide human rights groups over the last eight years, IPMN has evolved into a recognized leader within the denomination by providing educational material, study guides, and fact sheets that can be used to advocate for Palestinian human rights and a just peace for Palestinians and Israelis.

- The suffering of Palestinians has increased dramatically over the last eight years as more illegal Jewish only settlement colonies are built in the West Bank, the Israeli occupation of the West bank becomes more severe, and Gaza has been the target of multiple full scale military attacks. IPMN education materials have evolved over the last eight years to respond to the changing “facts on the ground.” They have investigated the root causes of the Israel-Palestinian conflict, and supported specific overtures that have come before the General Assembly calling for actions that support Palestinian human rights.

IPMN Major Publications:

see website under Study Resources->Publications

2006-2007: **Cradle of Our Faith:** The Enduring Witness of the Christians of the Middle East, a booklet for the 2007 “Week of Witness for Christians of the Middle East” endorsed by the 2006 GA for use in all PC(USA) congregations. The Reformed Church in America produced a 27-minute DVD to accompany Cradle of Our Faith.

2008: **Just Peace, A Commissioner's Guide.** This 8-page brochure and 15 minute DVD introduced the 218th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) to the Gospel mandate for peacemaking and to IPMN and its mission. (It is posted on our publications web page).

2009: **Steadfast Hope: The Palestinian Quest for Just Peace.** This 48-page booklet and 80 minute DVD introduced the elements of Israel's military “matrix of control” of the occupied Palestinian territories. An expanded second edition was published in 2011. The Palestine Israel Network of

the Episcopal Church also published a slightly edited version of *Steadfast Hope* tailored for Episcopalians.

2010: **Kairos Palestine—A Moment of Truth.** This publication includes the remarkable confession of faith and call to action of Palestinian church leaders, as well as a study guide for American congregations.

2012: Rev. Elizabeth Knott, IPMN member and Pal Craftaid founder, produced a Lenten study for congregations entitled **The Way of the Cross in Mark's Gospel**, which focuses on a Palestinian journey along the stations of the Cross. During the same year IPMN members Jim McGown and Melinda Thompson produced a **Daily Advent Devotional** as a response to Kairos Palestine.

After the 2012 General Assembly endorsed a boycott of all products “made by enterprises in Israeli settlements on Palestinian land,” Melinda Thompson produced an on-line **Boycott 101 Packet** to help congregations implement the GA mandate.

2014: **Zionism Unsettled** is a congregational study guide based on the book *Zionism and the Quest for Justice in the Holy Land*. Both were produced through close collaboration between IPMN and Friends of Sabeel North America. The purpose of both publications is to encourage a public debate in the US and elsewhere about a heretofore taboo subject, namely the role of the ideology of political Zionist and Christian Zionism in the ongoing dispossession of Palestinians.

More Education Cmt Output:

• **General Assembly Commissioner and Delegate Education**

Before each General Assembly, the Education Committee—with great assistance from the Communications Committee Chair—has prepared and mailed an educational package to every commissioner and delegate. This packet has provided them background material on the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory and the Israel Palestine Mission Network. This material is specifically designed to highlight information that commissioners and delegates will need in order to better understand and support IPMN-backed overtures that will be before that General Assembly.

IPMN has also brought a wide range of experts, activists, theologians and leaders of ecumenical and interfaith groups, as well as justice, research or human rights organizations to be resource persons at General Assemblies, including Palestinians, to educate, testify and guide as commissioners and advisory delegates deliberated and decided on overtures related to Palestine and Israel.

• **Fact Sheets and Literature**

The Education Committee has developed fact sheets and educational materials that can be used by individuals or congregations to become more involved in advocating for Palestinian human rights. These materials are available on the IPMN website, and include a compilation of PC (USA) positions on Israel-Palestine; a “boycott 101” primer to help individuals and congregations implement the 2012 General Assembly actions endorsing a boycott on products from illegal Israeli settlements in the West Bank, and *Steadfast Hope* fact sheets.

• **Videos**

IPMN produced short videos for the IPMN booths at GA and Big Tent. These include 7 clips in “Jewish Voices Against the Occupation” and 8 clips in “Sights and Sounds of the Occupation.” All are found under the Video tab on our website.

Also under the video tab are links to the IPMN Vimeo page where all the video episodes of *Steadfast Hope* and *Zionism Unsettled* are open-sourced in high definition for online viewing.

• **The Hosanna Prize**

Each year IPMN gives recognition to preachers who challenge and inspire believers to heed God's urgent call to justice and reconciliation in Palestine and Israel. Two \$1,000 prizes are awarded annually, one for an Old Testament text and the other on a New Testament text. Funds for this prize are donated by Noushin Framke in honor of her Armenian refugee grandmother, with the hope that all refugees might find their way home.



Advocacy

IPMN's stated goals starting in 2006 were to move the General Assembly to respond to Palestinian society's call to boycott/divestment/sanctions (BDS) so that our denomination could say it did respond favorably to that call as an ecclesiastical institution. With the engagement of members around the country, IPMN has worked on this over the long haul, succeeding in each of those three areas by advocacy and through partnerships.

With actions taken at the 2014 General Assembly, IPMN succeeded in responding to the Palestinian call for BDS. "Response" is indicative of our inherent sense of justice for all people as given to us by God, whereas "movement" is descriptive of what has occurred as a result of the wide response by ecclesiastical and secular bodies.

Even though language was added that the denomination is not "joining the BDS movement," IPMN sees this as a semantics play; the result is the same. We have in fact responded to the call of our brothers and sisters in Palestine by taking action.

Other Advocacy accomplishments have had to do with the Advocacy Committee's work side-by-side with the Education Committee over the years. Both committees had full agreement that advocacy goals could not be accomplished if they were not educating the denomination as a whole. So another important goal of Advocacy has been to support the creation of Education's resources for the denomination.

Advocacy Highlights

- Created by the GA as an advocacy group, IPMN advocated for overtures to General Assembly, including developing content and strategy
- Supported overture to GA (from Chicago Presbytery) that called on the US government to temporarily suspend military aid to Israel until it complies with US laws
 - In response to the above overture, IPMN supported and promoted "The Letter of 15" to Congress, signed by Stated Clerk Gradye Parsons and other ecumenical leaders
- At 2010 Annual Meeting, IPMN members voted to boycott all settlement goods. To have the whole denomination join us, we promoted an overture calling for boycott of Israeli settlement goods to the 2012 General Assembly, where it passed by over 70%.
 - An unprecedented vote: this was the first time the GA voted to boycott something on its first appearance in plenary
 - IPMN took leadership in interpreting that boycott as voted by the General Assembly and created educational and advocacy materials on our Boycott 101 page
- As early as 2006, advocated for divestment overtures, as well as MRTI recommendations calling for divestment from the Israeli occupation
 - assisted presbyteries sending those overtures forward in 2010, 2012 and 2014 General Assemblies
- Developed "voter guides" mailed to commissioners to all GAs, beginning in 2008.
- Along with Partnership Committee, developed strategic alliances to consult with ecumenical partners, helping them to start their own Israel/Palestine networks
 - Traveled to various gatherings of ecumenical partners to help get them started, including to Toronto, Canada for United Church of Canada Network
 - Supported other US denominations considering divestment recommendations in their national meetings, including UMC and UCC
- Created and promoted interfaith partnerships in divestment and justice strategies, including IPMN's relationship with Jewish Voice for Peace
- Provided sample overture rationales and coordinated language on overtures regarding
 - Divestment from US corporations profiting from occupation
 - Condemning apartheid in Palestine
 - Boycott of products of illegal settlements in Palestine
 - Boycott of US corporations whose products support the Palestinian occupation
 - Differentiating between biblical Israel and the modern state of Israel in our liturgies and worship materials
- During the summer of 2014 assault on Gaza, spearheaded an action to all faith groups, asking them to join us in a call for an arms embargo on Israel. 50+ faith groups signed on.
- All current and archived IPMN statements and press releases can be found under the Advocacy Tab on the homepage. Usually, the top three are also displayed on our homepage.

Partnerships and Alliances

Cultivating and fostering partnerships through existing PCUSA relationships with churches and church-based/interfaith programs in the region and encouraging congregations and presbyteries to develop partnerships has been a central focus of IPMN. Through this outreach IPMN

- Promotes Palestinian products such as crafts and olive oil for purchase at church and other events, as a way of educating about the issues and supporting the Palestinian economy,
- Encourages PCUSA members and others to travel to the region; provides guidelines to help travelers see the sites as well as meet the people and learn about current realities in both Israel and Palestine; co-sponsors trips, advertises trips on web site,
- Provides scholarships for young adults to travel to the region and to engage with PCUSA action and advocacy upon return,
- Connects with other networks and entities in the US, in Israel and Palestine, and globally to work together in faithful pursuit of a just peace.

Primary IPMN Partner Organizations

(alphabetical, not including some grant-receiving organizations)

1. B'Tselem, The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories (printed and distributed 2000 copies of their annual report at General Assemblies)
2. Bright Stars of Bethlehem
3. Christ at the Checkpoint Conferences: IPMN members attended in Bethlehem
4. Churches for Middle East Peace - Amb. Warren Clarke has attended our annual meetings
5. CNI , Council for National Interest - "National Summit to Reassess the US-Israel "Special Relationship"" at the National Press Club in D.C. - ZU sold at event shop
6. Code Pink - Partnered on boycott, members attended 2012 meeting in Chicago
7. Episcopalian Peace Fellowship Palestine Israel Network (PIN) is a direct result of IPMN's work with this group and through their attendance at our annual meetings.
8. Friends of Sabeel North America
9. Friends of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem, particularly in support of Al Ahli Hospital in Gaza and other Palestinian-based programs
10. Import Peace (Fair trade Palestinian olive oil); now Zatoun; partnerships at General Assembly, including sale of olive oil and *Zionism Unsettled*
11. Israeli Committee Against House Demolition (ICAH), hosted Jeff Halper at GA 2008 & 2010
12. Jewish Voice for Peace, JVP, including JVP Rabbinical Council
13. Kairos Palestine: IPMN members present at its launch in December 2009
14. Kairos Southern Africa: resource sharing on Israel/Palestine issues
15. Kairos USA - IPMN one of the founding members
16. Keep Hope Alive – Olive tree planting and harvesting trips from the U.S. (2 trips per year)
17. Pal Craftaid (Fair trade Palestinian olive wood sculptures and needlework)
18. Palestine Israel Ecumenical Forum of the World Council of Churches, PIEF, member organization
19. Partners for Peace (now merged with the Council for the National Interest, CNI) – Has itinerated 16 tours of Jerusalem Women Speak: Three Women, Three Faiths, One Shared Vision, highlighting the non-violent efforts of Palestinians, Israelis, and citizens of other nations to end the occupation of the Palestinian territories.
20. Presbyterian Peace Fellowship – A number of IPMN members are part of both organizations; IPMN well represented at annual Peace Convocation over the years; some joint strategy for GA advocacy
21. Rabbis for Human Rights (now T'ruah)
22. San Francisco Jewish Film Festival (founder is one of the filmmakers of *Between Two Worlds*, shown at an IPMN meeting in co-sponsorship with Jewish Voice for Peace)
23. Tent of Nations – a bridge-building farm near Bethlehem, bringing diverse people together
24. United Church of Canada Palestine Network
25. United Church of Christ Palestine Israel Network (UCCPIN) formed as IPMN was reaching out to ecumenical partners; support for their divestment initiatives at General Synod
26. United Methodist Kairos Response - UMKR, founders have attended IPMN early meetings
27. US Campaign to End the Occupation; IPMN founding member of the interfaith group; partnered with the US Campaign in General Assembly Advocacy
28. Who Profits - attended 2012 IPMN meeting in Chicago, consult on boycott info
29. World Communion of Reformed Churches: resource sharing on Israel/Palestine conflict
30. YMCA of East Jerusalem; YWCA of Palestine

Communications

and Web-based Outreach

- Produced IPMN logo: Based on a Jerusalem tile from the Armenian Quarter, Martina Reese was asked to simplify it and design a logo for IPMN in Fall 2006
- Website development and maintenance
 - * The web site developer is a Palestinian American who was displaced as a refugee in 1967. The work is done gratis.
 - * Currently hosted by GoDaddy under 2 URL addresses full name of network, plus *theIPMN.org*;
 - * Our homepage carries a LIVE newsfeed that is fed from several sources of news organizations: Ha'aretz, BBC Mideast, Mondoweiss, Electronic Intifada and 972Mag
- Social Media:
 - * Twitter account - most recent IPMN tweets appear on our homepage
 - * Facebook group: We have a "closed" FB group, i.e., access by approval only, but it is currently compromised by an "opposition" person who has done screen captures of activity, so in effect, it is public
- Email Blasts: Beginning Nov 2011, IPMN has used Mailchimp email services to send out emails to various lists, including our main list anyone can sign up to on our homepage. There is a "Members and Friends" list and an "Executive Presbyter" list. Our "Members and Friends" list is finally connected to our cloud database, so it is constantly updated with new email addresses
 - * Our email blasts archive appears on website
- Press Releases: After the 2010 GA in Minneapolis when we paid for a PR specialist, we began writing our own press releases and using Religion New Service (RNS) to send them out.
 - * Beginning in 2012, we worked with IMEU, Institute for Middle East Understanding, for contact with press and getting our quotes into the media
 - * We have also worked with Mondoweiss and Electronic Intifada
- Articles: A writers group (about 10 people) has been formed that we draw from when articles on specific issues are needed.
 - * They have been carried by PNS, Presbyterian News Service, in the past, but going forward, we will use regional press

- Print materials for meetings and events: Developed IPMN brochures and handouts in partnership with Education and Advocacy Committees, most of which are available for download on our website on GA pages
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Other IPMN Efforts

- Online petition to President Obama on statehood recognition at the United Nations, September 2011; 450+ Presbyterian signatures, printed and delivered to the White House
 - Creating scholarship fund for travel to Palestine and Israel for young adults and fostering leadership of young adults in advocacy and education on Palestine and Israel
 - Following passage of IPMN initiative on boycott, IPMN partnered with Compassion, Peace and Justice Office of PC(USA) and Presbyterian Peace Fellowship on producing resource materials related to the boycott of products from illegal Israeli settlements in Palestine
 - IPMNers lead trips to I/P through Keep Hope Alive
 - IPMN sponsors trips to the region led by members with continued advocacy, providing scholarships for travel
 - Letter of support signed by 400+ Presbyterians in support of the Middle East Study Group report leading up to the 2010 GA and 900+ Presbyterians in support of MRTI Report leading up to 2012 GA
 - IPMN initiated efforts to learn of opportunities for positive investment in the Palestinian territories. Two IPMNers traveled to region with reps from interested church partners and organizations in 2008. IPMN supported a 2014 overture affirming Palestinian economic investment along with divestment in conjunction with Presbyterian Peace Fellowship
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Awards

- 2012 - Annual Damu Smith Memorial Activist Award, granted by US Campaign to End the Occupation to IPMNER Noushin Framke (inaugural year)
- 2013 - Presbyterian Peace Fellowship's Peaceseeker Award, granted jointly to IPMN and Jewish Voice for Peace for work at 220th GA (awarded annually since 1970)