

# Peace Not Walls Packet

## Educational and Support Resources

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### **What is the ELCA's campaign, "Peace Not Walls"?**

Peace Not Walls is how the ELCA organizes its work around seeking peace and justice in Israel and Palestine. In 2005 the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) adopted the Churchwide Strategy for Engagement in Israel and Palestine. This document outlines our church's approach to the conflict. The lens that we use to understand the situation is based in human rights and human dignity. The approach that we use to engage is accompaniment, awareness raising, and advocacy.

### **What is the ELCA's vision for Israel and Palestine?**

The ELCA's Peace Not Walls Campaign is committed to Israelis and Palestinians co-existing in justice and peace, as citizens of viable and secure Israeli and Palestinian states, a reduction in poverty and unemployment among Palestinians and access to basic services, an end to the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories, an end to terrorism and violence by individuals, groups, and states, and a negotiated final status agreement, which includes a "shared Jerusalem" that can serve as a capital to both Palestine and Israel, with access by and full rights in the city for Jews, Christians and Muslims.

### **What is the purpose of this information packet?**

The conflict in Israel and Palestine is complex and nuanced. It can be overwhelming to know where to start. This packet sets out a list of books, films, podcasts, new sources, organizations, and maps to help you get started in learning more.

### **Disclaimer:**

The opinions expressed in the annotations below are the authors' alone. The resources are included here for informational purposes, and do not constitute an official endorsement by the ELCA.

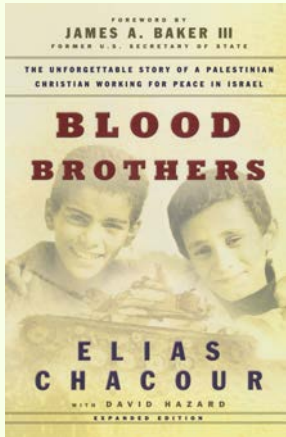


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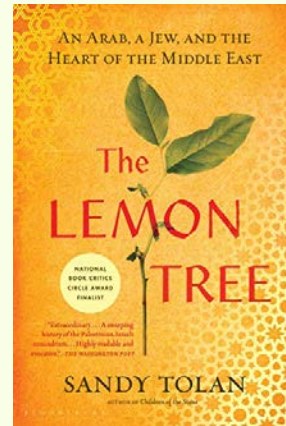
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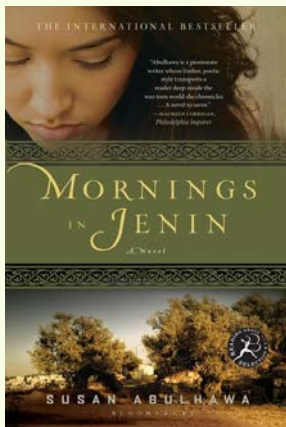
# Beginner Books



**Blood Brothers** by Elias Chacour blends his life story with historical research to reveal a little-known side of the conflict. An exile in his native land, Elias began a years-long struggle with his love for the Jewish people and the world's misunderstanding of his own people, the Palestinians.



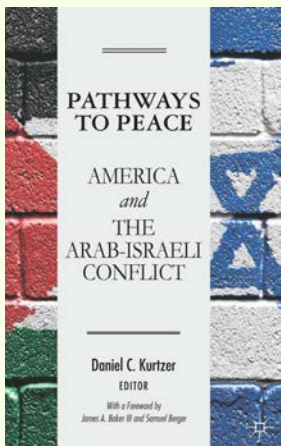
**The Lemon Tree** by Sandy Tolan brings the Israeli-Palestinian conflict down to its most human level, suggesting that even amid the bleakest political realities there exist stories of hope and reconciliation.



**Mornings in Jenin** by Susan Abulhawa tells the story of the Abulhejas who are forcibly moved from their home and into the Jenin refugee camp. Through this book, you are told the Palestinian story through four generations of a single family.

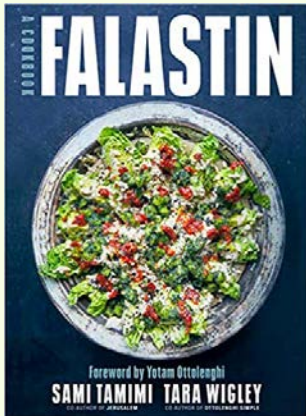


**Palestine: Peace Not Apartheid** by Jimmy Carter presents facts about the Middle East that are largely unknown in America to precipitate discussion and inspire other Americans to share these facts and views with others.

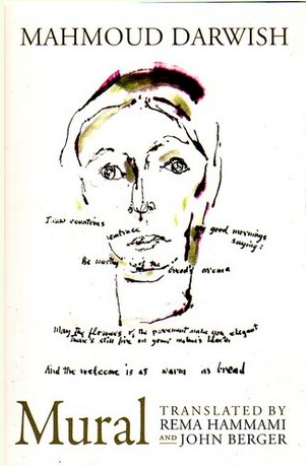


**Pathways to Peace** by Daniel C. Kurtzer discusses how recent upheavals in the Middle East challenge long-held assumptions about the dynamics between the United States, the Arab world, and Israel.

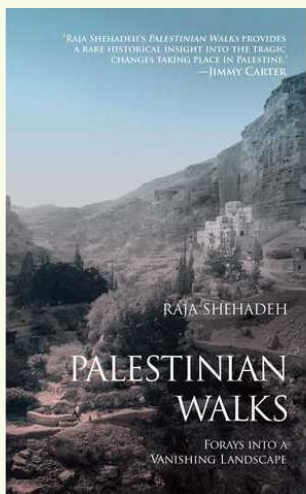
# Going Deeper Books



**Falastin: A Cookbook** by Sami Tamimi and Tara Wigley retraces the lineage and evolution of Tamimi's country's cuisine. From refugee-camp cooks to the home kitchens of Gaza and the mill of a master tahini maker, Tammy teases out the vestiges of an ancient culinary tradition as he records the derivations of dynamic cuisine and people in more than 130 photographs and 120 recipes.

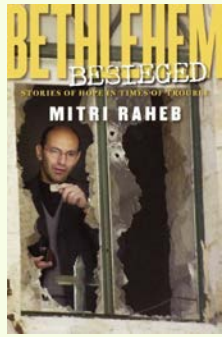


**Mural** by Mahmoud Darwish is a translation of two of his later works. Darwish was the Palestinian national poet. His work evokes the loss of his homeland and is suffused with the pain of dispossession and exile. His poems display a brilliant acuity, a passion for and openness to the world, and above all, a deep and abiding humanity. This is just one of the many works by Darwish that is available.

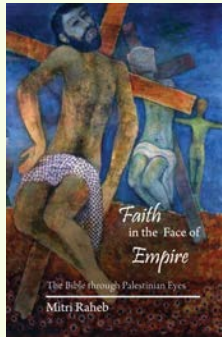


**Palestinian Walks: Forays into a Vanishing Landscape** by Raja Shehadeh accompanies the author on six walks taken between 1978 and 2006. The earlier forays are peaceful affairs, allowing our guide to meditate at length on the character of his native land. But latterly, as seemingly endless concrete is poured to build illegal settlements and their surrounding walls, he finds the old trails are now impassable and the countryside he once traversed freely has become contested ground.

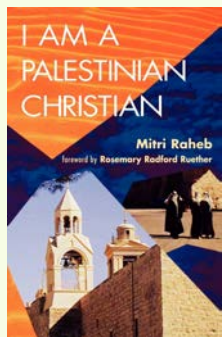
# Books by Palestinian Christians



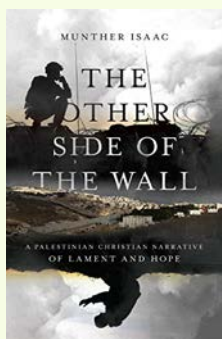
**Bethlehem Besieged** by Mitri Raheb presents a powerful collection of compelling personal stories of desperation and hope in the midst of lethal conflict, bringing the Palestinian/Israeli conflict up close and personal. His passionate personal testimony lifts up the stray gesture toward friendship, the brave attempts to rebuild life and livelihood in a destroyed land, and the unquenchable desire for justice and peace.



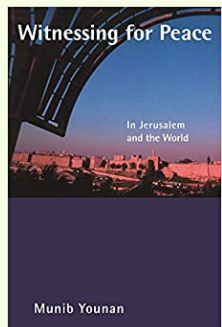
**Faith in the Face of Empire** by Mitri Raheb views how the reality of empire shapes the context of the biblical story and the ongoing experience of Middle East conflict. For Raheb, the Middle Eastern context of the biblical story is crucial to its understanding and its relevance to people today. A Palestinian reading of the Bible begins with an awareness of the role of empire- a constant feature of Palestine for thousands of years. For “the people of the land,” those who endure from one empire to the next, the question, “Where is God?” Carries practical and theological urgency.



**I Am a Palestinian Christian** by Mitri Raheb is a personal testimony of God and politics in the Holy Land. Raheb is a Palestinian Arab Lutheran Christian pastor in his hometown of Bethlehem. For many American Christians this combination of identities is incomprehensible. Raheb writes as a cultural mediator to the Western Christian world and as a local theologian for the Palestinian community. He grapples with how Palestinian Christians can develop a local theology that can be both truthful and helpful in mediating the conflicts between Israel and Palestine and among Christianity, Judaism, and Islam. Both are conflicts in which religion, politics, and collective identity intertwine.



**The Other Side of the Wall** by Munther Isaac provides an opportunity to hear the realities of life on the ground from a leading Palestinian pastor and theologian. Isaac laments the injustices suffered by the Palestinian people but holds out hope for a just peace and ways to befriend and love his Jewish and Muslim neighbors. He offers a theology of the land and a vision for a shared land that belongs to God, where there are no second-class citizens of any kind.



**Witnessing for Peace** by Munib Younan presents first the historical and social context of the Palestinian situation, beginning with the not-well-known story of Arab Christianity and his own background. He elaborates his own theology of nonviolence, centered in the idea of martyria-heeding a call to justice, inclusion, and forgiveness. He illustrates the notion with tragic episodes and shows how it can address key issues in the current struggle with Israel over statehood, land, and refugees.

# People and Organizations to Follow

## Organizations to Follow

- [Americans for Peace Now](#)
- [B'Tselem](#)
- [Breaking the Silence](#)
- [Churches for Middle East Peace](#)
- [Defense for Children International Palestine](#)
- [Diyar Consortium](#)
- [Ecumenical Accompaniment Program in Palestine and Israel](#)
- [Foundation for Middle East Peace](#)
- [Opportunity Palestine](#)
- [UNOCHA OPT](#) (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the Occupied Palestinian Territories)

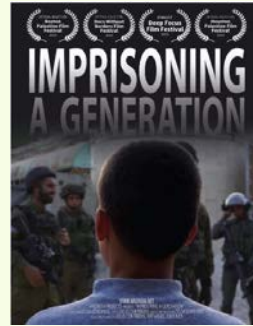
## Connect with ELCA mission personnel serving in Jerusalem

- To sign up for Pastor Carrie's newsletter (Pastor at Lutheran Church of the Redeemer English speaking congregation in Jerusalem), email: [Redeemerofjerusalem@gmail.com](mailto:Redeemerofjerusalem@gmail.com)
- For Pastor Carrie's sermons, you can also subscribe to [knitpurlpraypreach.blogspot.com](http://knitpurlpraypreach.blogspot.com)
- To receive newsletters from Gabi and Meghan (YAGM Country Coordinators for Jerusalem and the West Bank): [meghan.aelabouni@elca.org](mailto:meghan.aelabouni@elca.org) or [gabi.aelabouni@elca.org](mailto:gabi.aelabouni@elca.org)

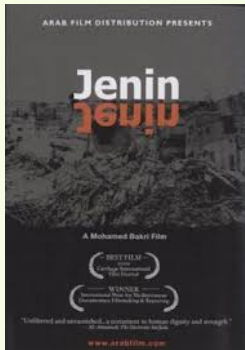
# Movies, TV Shows, and Visual Media



**5 Broken Cameras** is an Oscar-nominated first-hand account of protests in Bil'in, a West Bank village affected by the separation wall. The documentary was shot by Palestinian farmer Emad Burnat. You can rent the documentary through Amazon [here](#).



**Imprisoning a Generation** is a documentary film that follows the stories of four young Palestinians who have been detained and imprisoned in the Israeli military detention system and prosecuted in Israeli military courts. See future showings or schedule a screening [here](#).



**Jenin, Jenin** is a film directed by Mohammed Bakri, an Arab actor and Israeli citizen, in order to portray what Bakri calls “the Palestinian truth” about a clash between the Israeli army and Palestinians in April 2002 in Jenin refugee camp. You can watch it [here](#).



**Palestine: Rick Steves** travels with Rick Steves through Palestine. They harvest olives, follow pilgrims, swim in the Dead Sea, and join Palestinians for dinner, while learning about walls and illegal Israeli settlements. You can watch the segment [here](#).



**Walled Citizen** follows Sameer Qumsiyeh a Palestinian filmmaker and backpacker. Carrying one of the world's weakest passports, he decides to grab his camera and explore what lies behind the walls of our world.



**The Wanted 18** is an animated documentary about the efforts of Palestinians in Beit Sahour to start a small local dairy industry during the First Intifada, hiding a herd of 18 dairy cows from Israeli soldiers. You can rent or buy the movie on YouTube [here](#).

# Podcasts



**PeaceCast** from Americans for Peace Now talks with experts, activists, and scholars about issues relating to peace and security, focusing on the conflict. Listen [here](#).



**Unsettled** is a podcast about Israel-Palestine and the Jewish diaspora. It's here to provide a space for the difficult conversations and diverse viewpoints. Listen [here](#).



**Women Behind the Wall** stands at the intersection of gender, religion, and conflict, offering you a glimpse into the lives of Palestinian Christian women living under Israeli occupation. Listen [here](#).

# Maps and Infographics

Maps can help us visualize the complex geography of the area. These resources provide us with present day context, while tracking changes over time.

## **B'Tselem**

- B'Tselem has interactive maps throughout the West Bank and beyond. These maps show illegal settlements, checkpoints, and more.

## **UN OCHA**

- UN OCHA has current interactive maps, including one of [Gaza](#) and one of the [West Bank](#). These maps include settlements, movement obstacles, infrastructure and more.



# Action Steps

**Take Action:** Once you have had the chance to learn more, we invite you into opportunities to take action around accompaniment, awareness raising, and advocacy.

## Accompaniment

**Trips to the Holy Land:** *We have resources to help you plan or find an accompaniment based trip.*

The primary purpose of an accompaniment-based trip is to be in relationship with and to learn from the local population, specifically our companion the ELCJHL and LWF-Jerusalem. We encourage you to meet the living stones of this land when you visit the Holy Land. We invite you make the time listen, learn, and grow in your understanding of the complex life in Palestine under Israeli occupation in order that you might return to the US and share what you have learned.

## Awareness Raising

**Coming soon: Child Detention Toolkit:** *This toolkit will provide background information, resources for hosting in-person or virtual educational events, and resources for taking action.*

In the Israeli-controlled occupied Palestinian territories (East Jerusalem and the West Bank), Israeli security forces utilize a military detention system to address alleged violations of their military law. Each year, 500-700 Palestinian children are detained by the Israeli security forces; the majority of children detained are boys. Since 2000, at least 10,000 Palestinian children have been arrested and prosecuted in an Israeli military detention system.

## Advocacy

**Peace Not Walls Action Alerts:** [sign up to receive monthly alerts](#) with a sample letter that will take just a couple of minutes to send to your Members of Congress. Be sure to click on “Middle East Network”.

## Connect with Peace Not Walls

- Email [peacenotwalls@elca.org](mailto:peacenotwalls@elca.org)
  - to be added to the PNW listserv
  - to find out if there is a PNW working group in your area/synod
  - to host a speaker for your worship service, educational event, or to facilitate a film/book/podcast discussion
  - to get trip planning resources
  - to learn about longer service opportunities



# Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land



Members of the Lutheran Church of the Redeemer Jerusalem Congregation sing as they walk through the streets of the Old City for the Maundy Thursday procession.



Students at the Lutheran School of Hope in Ramallah celebrate the first day back to school.

The **Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL)** is a partner of the ELCA. The ELCJHL is a Palestinian Lutheran church that seeks to be the embodiment of Christ in the Holy Land by working as brokers of justice, ministers of reconciliation, and apostles of love in a broken land.

Through their six churches (one in Jordan and five in Jerusalem and the West Bank), numerous schools and educational ministries, the ELCJHL is working to shape Palestinian society through education that aims to provide Christian evangelical instruction, quality training, and peace education.

Through projects such as the Women's Desk, the Deaf Ministry, youth work, and meals on wheels, the ELCJHL seeks to empower those often marginalized in society and to show that, through God's grace, we are all called to service.

## **Peace Education for Christians and Muslims**

The ELCJHL believes that peace will come through education and through learning about "the other" – and through accepting that person as being made in God's image. Because of this, the ELCJHL educates Christians and Muslims together. Christians and Muslims pray together in school, learn Christian hymns, and participate in Christian holidays. In all of the schools, students also take classes where they learn about each others' religions.

**The Lutheran World Federation (LWF)** is a global communion of Christian churches in the Lutheran tradition. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL) are two of the 145 member churches of the LWF.

**The LWF Jerusalem Program** is one of the LWF's oldest and largest humanitarian programs. It has been serving the needs of Palestinian refugees in the Palestinian Territories for 70 years.

### **Augusta Victoria Hospital (AVH)**

Today Augusta Victoria Hospital provides specialty services in areas such as oncology and nephrology to patients from Gaza and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. AVH continues to establish new health services otherwise not available to the Palestinian community such as the Mobile Diabetes and Mobile Mammography Units.

AVH is the first and only hospital in Gaza and the West Bank to provide radiation therapy for cancer patients in the Palestinian territories and is the only medical facility in the West Bank offering pediatric kidney dialysis.

**Advocacy Opportunity: Learn more about the funding crisis with the most recent AVH Receivables Fact sheet and the AVH O&A.**

### **LWF Vocational Training Program (VTP)**

The Vocational Training Program trains male and female youth, ages 15-22, in quality vocational training and education, to empower young people to become employed skilled and semi-skilled workers, and to contribute to economic development that is critical to building a strong civil society in Palestine.



Students at the LWF Vocational Training Program are pictured learning carpentry.



A child is cared for by a nurse at Augusta Victoria Hospital.



Students at the LWF Vocational Training Program are pictured learning ceramics.

# News Resources

Sometimes it can be difficult to stay up-to-date on events in Israel and Palestine as media in the U.S. often focuses on national issues instead of global issues. The following news resources are reliable in their coverage.



[Al Jazeera](#)



[Al-Monitor](#)



[Foundation for Middle East Peace- daily news email](#)



[Haaretz](#)



[Maan News](#)



[+972 Magazine](#)