



D2 Resolutions Committee Report

Submitted by The Rev. Josh Hosler, chair

Members of the Committee: The Rev. Rilla Barrett; Jon Fedele, Emmanuel, Mercer Island; The Rev. Josh Hosler, chair, Church of the Good Shepherd, Federal Way; Micah Kurtz, St. Columba's, Kent; Mary Maxon, St. Luke's, Vancouver.

To reach the Resolutions Committee, email: resolutions@ecww.org

Actions of the Committee: Following the 45-day canonical deadline of September 8, 2026 the committee met and reviewed the three submitted resolutions. Below are the committee's recommendations, as well as the full text of each resolution, including any explanation.

ZOOM FORUM: The Resolutions Committee will host a Zoom forum on all resolutions, Wednesday, October 14, 2026, at 7 pm. Proposers of resolutions will be on hand to answer questions for clarification and add additional background information as needed. The forum is not a time for formal debate or amendments.

Recommendations from the Resolutions Committee

Resolution #1: The Committee recommends **DO PASS** on Resolution #1 entitled Fiscal Year 2028 Assessment Rate, submitted by the Diocesan Council. [Page 2]

Resolution #2: The Committee recommends **DO PASS** on Resolution #2 entitled Cost-Of-Living Adjustment, submitted by the Personnel Commission. [Page 3]

Resolution #3: The Committee recommends **DO PASS** on Resolution #3 entitled Suffering in the Holy Land: A Call to Witness and Action, submitted by The Rev. Connie Carlson, retired; The Rev. Canon Robert F. Hayman, retired; The Rev. David Mesenbring, retired; Dr. Megan E. Miller, delegate from St. Thomas, Medina; Laurie Parrish, delegate from St. Paul's, Bellingham; Mary Pneuman, delegate from St. Thomas, Medina; Barbara Selberg, delegate from St. Mark's, Seattle; John Selberg, delegate from St. Mark's, Seattle; Kimberly Shelton, delegate from St. Andrew's, Seattle. [Page 6]

Resolution #1 - Fiscal Year 2028 Assessment Rate

Submitted by Diocesan Council

Resolved, that this 115th Convention of the Diocese of Olympia approve the diocesan assessment rate factor be set at 14.5% of the Net Disposable Income (NDI).

Explanation:

In accordance with Canon 7, Diocesan Convention determines the assessment rate for the second year of assessment following determination; thus, the 2026 Convention sets the 2028 assessment rate.

In the last two decades, the rate has been steadily reduced to its current rate of 14.5%. From 2004-2006, the rate was 20%. From 2007-2011, the rate was reduced to 18%. In 2012, the rate was 17.5%. From 2013-2015, the rate was 17%. In 2016, the rate was 16%. In 2017 and 2018, the assessment rate was 15%. Since 2019, the rate has been steady at 14.5%.

This recommendation is based on the following factors. First, congregations throughout the diocese continue to contribute their assessments in a timely manner, and with rare exception, congregations pay their assessment balances in full. In addition, diocesan staff continue to be good stewards of the resources entrusted to them by carefully managing expenses of programs that support our new missional framework centering discipleship. Finally, in planning the 2027 budget, the finance team has received feedback that congregations are generally planning for similar assessment amounts.

In addition to income from assessments, the diocese relies on capital gains and use of net assets fund operations. Use of capital gains and net assets to balance the budget is governed by the Board of Directors in accordance with a long-standing expenditure policy for endowments. This policy is designed to preserve underlying investment balances while also giving the diocese flexibility to use a portion of those investments to carry out the ministry and mission of the diocese. If actual assessments and other revenue equal or exceed budget and if actual expenses come in under budget, then the use of capital gains and net assets is minimal in a given year. If actual revenue is under budget or expenses exceed budget, larger draws from capital gains and net assets will be necessary.

Resolution #2 - 2027 Cost-of-Living Adjustment

Submitted by Personnel Commission

Resolved, that this 116th Convention of the Diocese of Olympia sets the Cost-of-Living Adjustment for 2027 for the parochial clergy salary scale and the Office of the Bishop staff salary scale at 3.5%.

Explanation:

As required by Canon 23, sections 2 and 5, the Personnel Commission proposes the Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) for 2027 for the Parochial Clergy Salary Scale and the Office of the Bishop staff salary scale. The Personnel Commission uses the year-over-year change in the Bureau of Labor Statistics Core Consumer Price Index (CPI) for the Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue area to determine the COLA.

From June 2025 to June 2026, reported in July, the Core Consumer Price Index (CPI) increased by 3.5%. The Core CPI measures the average change in prices over time in a fixed basket of goods and services. The Core CPI is used instead of the full CPI because it excludes volatile food and energy, which can fluctuate month to month. The Core CPI provides a clearer view of long-term inflation trends.

The Core CPI is based on prices of clothing, shelter, transportation fares, charges for doctors' and dentists' services, drugs, and other goods and services that people buy for day-to-day living. The Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue metropolitan area comprises King, Pierce, and Snohomish Counties. Due to the economic volatility we are experiencing in 2026, the Personnel Commission plans to monitor the year-over-year change from August 2025 to August 2026, which will be reported in September, and, if necessary, propose an amendment to this resolution.

The diocese represents a diverse economic reality, including three major metropolitan areas as well as rural communities. As we examine the Church's role in creating economic justice for all people, we lead by modeling just wages for Church employees. Wages that take into consideration the higher cost of living in this region are working toward economic justice, something that our Diocese of Olympia has supported since the implementation of the clergy salary scale in 1974. The Commission's ongoing work includes restructuring the clergy pay scale to reflect the diocese's geo-economic diversity. See the Commission report for more information on our ongoing work.

The proposed COLA raises the wage for clergy and Bishop's staff who are being paid at the minimum rate for their position. The scale increase enacted by the proposed COLA will enable faith communities in our diocese to continue to call the leaders we need in this time that requires vision and agility.

For information purposes, the Personnel Commission offers the parochial clergy salary scale (for full-time positions) adjusted for the proposed COLA. The adjusted scale was calculated by applying the proposed COLA to the midpoint of each grade; the minimum is 80% of the midpoint, and the maximum is 120% of the midpoint. Hourly rates for annualized salaries are also provided. Also, grades have been flipped, with Grade E now the first line in the charts, reflecting that the largest number of our parochial clergy are paid in Grade E and Grade D.

Proposed 2027 Parochial Clergy Salary Scale

Annualized Salaries

2027	80% of mid-point		120% of mid-point
Grade	minimum	mid-point	maximum
E	\$85,686	\$107,108	\$128,530
D	\$94,139	\$117,673	\$141,208
C	\$103,534	\$129,417	\$155,301
B	\$113,910	\$142,387	\$170,864
A	\$125,303	\$156,629	\$187,954

Hourly rates for annualized salaries, based on a 2080-hour year.

Grade	minimum	mid-point	maximum
E	\$41.20	\$51.49	\$61.79
D	\$45.26	\$56.57	\$67.89
C	\$49.78	\$62.22	\$74.66
B	\$54.76	\$68.46	\$82.15
A	\$60.24	\$75.30	\$90.36

Mandatory Policies (apply to rectors and vicars):

1. If church-owned housing is provided, contact the Canon to the Ordinary for information on calculating the value of housing and utilities (for tax and pension purposes) and adjusting cash compensation.
2. Clergy must be paid at least the minimum of the applicable range.
3. Clergy with five (5) or more years of ordained service must be paid at least 90% of the mid-point of their congregation's applicable grade. [See advisory note below.]
4. Clergy with ten (10) or more years of ordained service must be paid at least 100% of the mid-point of their congregation's applicable grade. [See advisory note below.]
5. Exceptions to these policies require the approval of the Bishop.
6. All financial agreements with clergy must be rewritten or amended in their Mutual Ministry Agreement to reflect changes in compensation or provisions, and a copy forwarded to the Bishop by January 31 of each year.

Advisory Policies:

1. For additional paid clergy (associate, assistant), it is recommended that minimum compensation be established at two salary grades below that established for the parish or mission, depending upon qualifications and experience.
2. A clergy person with less than five (5) years of ordained service should receive pay increases greater than the cost-of-living adjustment so the salary reaches 90% of the mid-point by the fifth year.
3. A clergy person approaching (10) years of ordained service should receive pay increases greater than the cost-of-living adjustment so the salary reaches 100% of the mid-point by the tenth year.
4. If a congregation is moving toward a higher grade, that congregation would be wise to increase toward that new salary grade incrementally.
5. Parishes and missions are encouraged to consider clergy experience and performance when deliberating compensation increases in excess of the COLA.
6. For interim clergy of a parish or mission, it is recommended that compensation be at the grade level of the parish or mission, with consideration for any specialized interim training.
7. Parishes, missions, and affiliated ministries are encouraged to consider providing a COLA adjustment to lay staff in parity with clergy.

Resolution #3 - Suffering in the Holy Land: A Call to Witness and Action

Submitted by:

The Rev. Connie Carlson, retired

The Rev. Canon Robert F. Hayman, retired

The Rev. David Mesenbring, retired

Dr. Megan E. Miller, delegate from St. Thomas, Medina

Laurie Parrish, delegate from St. Paul's, Bellingham

Mary Pneuman, delegate from St. Thomas, Medina

Barbara Selberg, delegate from St. Mark's, Seattle

John Selberg, delegate from St. Mark's, Seattle

Kimberly Shelton, delegate from St. Andrew's, Seattle

Resolved, that this 116th Convention of the Diocese of Olympia submit the following resolution to the 82nd General Convention of The Episcopal Church:

Resolved, that we acknowledge that our baptismal covenant calls us to respond with action to the immense suffering in the Holy Land; and be it further

Resolved, that we recognize that the present situation is an emergency and requires urgent action to protect Palestinians and the Christian presence throughout Palestine; and be it further

Resolved, that we respond to the plea from Palestinian Christians to witness their suffering and urge the Church at all levels to engage in active study of the Kairos Palestine documents¹ as authentic expressions of the lived experience of Palestinians and our Christian call to respond; and be it further

Resolved, that we feature Palestinian voices in our study, sermons, and programs and, when able, visit Palestine and Israel for pilgrimage, solidarity, and witness to the present realities; and be it further

Resolved, that we lament a tragic history of Jewish persecution and reject antisemitism unequivocally, yet we refuse to remain silent about the humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza and the Occupied West Bank; and be it further

Resolved, that we reject the false choice between compassion for the Jewish people and justice for Palestinians; and be it further

Resolved, that we participate in honest interfaith conversations with Jewish and Muslim voices in the pursuit of justice, equality, peace, and reconciliation for all people in the Holy Land; and be it further

Resolved, that we preserve and protect the freedom to criticize the actions of the United States government and the government of Israel, rejecting the conflation of criticism of a government with criticism of its people; and be it further

¹ https://www.kairospalestine.ps/images/Final_Kairos_document_II_English.pdf

Resolved, that we recognize the role of the United States in providing essential military and political support for the Israeli government's aggression against Palestinians and in undermining efforts by the international community to hold Israel accountable to international law; and be it further

Resolved, that we urge advocacy by our churches and members in support of conditioning U.S. military aid on Israel's establishment of a meaningful and lasting ceasefire in Gaza and stopping the displacement of Palestinians, settler expansion, and violence in the West Bank, using such methods as speaking out to elected officials, peaceful protest, and education; and be it further

Resolved, that we pray for a just and enduring peace in the Holy Land.

Explanation:

"Please tell the world about us."

Palestinians are pleading with the world to witness their suffering and to respond. Palestinian Christians are pleading with Western churches to not look away.

When I was in Gaza, sometimes patients or doctors would need my medical assistance. But mostly, what they asked for was to be seen. Please, tell the world about us, they would say.

- Dr. Clayton Dalton, American doctor working in Gaza²

In moments like these, silence is not an option. It is a form of complicity.

- The Rev. Fadi Diab, Palestinian Anglican Priest in the West Bank³

Tens of thousands of Palestinians have been killed, including 20,000 children, many starved to death. Yet the global church remains largely silent. How many more children must be killed before Christians open their eyes?

- The Rev. Munther Isaac, Palestinian Lutheran pastor in the West Bank⁴

Palestinian Christians

Palestinian Christians have lived on the historic land of Palestine since Jesus was born there and began his ministry. Many people of historic Palestine embraced his teaching and became the first Christians. Palestinian Christians have continued to live in the Holy Land ever since and represent the oldest Christian community in the world. For much of history prior to 1948, Christians, Jews and Muslims lived together peacefully.

Today, the Christian population has decreased significantly and its survival is in peril. In 1948 when the State of Israel was created, an estimated 10-12% of the population was Christian; it is

² "Bearing Witness in Gaza," Lion's Roar Magazine

³

<https://episcopalnewsservice.org/pressreleases/episcopal-peace-fellowship-palestine-justice-network-call-s-executive-council-to-endorse-bds>

⁴ "Sermon to the West," Bethlehem Institute for Peace and Justice

now less than 2%. In the West Bank and Gaza, Christians numbered approximately 10%; they are now close to 1%.⁵

Most Christian emigration occurred after 1968 when Israel began its military occupation of Palestine and severely reduced Palestinian rights and freedoms. Life under increasing restrictions and violence in the West Bank has accelerated it.⁶

Violent attacks on individual Christians and Christian holy sites in the West Bank and Jerusalem have become common and are increasing. A recent report from NBC News underscores the increasing threat to Christianity.⁷

The Anglican church has existed in Palestine since 1841. The Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem is responsible for parishes and human services in Israel, Palestine, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria and is home to about 7000 Anglicans worshipping in 28 different congregations. It oversees more than thirty schools, rehabilitation centers and healthcare institutions, including hospitals in Gaza, Jerusalem and the West Bank.⁸

Churches in the Diocese of Olympia have enjoyed companion connections with the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem for many years.⁹

Although most Palestinians were and still are Muslim, the Palestinian Christian population lives in peaceful coexistence with Palestinian Muslims.

Kairos Palestine

Kairos Palestine is a worldwide Christian Palestinian movement and advocacy organization launched in 2009 by a broad coalition of ecumenical Palestinian clergy, theologians and lay leaders. The founding *Kairos Palestine* document "*A Moment of Truth: A Word of Faith, Hope, and Love from the Heart of Palestinian Suffering*" regards the Israeli occupation of Palestine as a sin against God and humanity and calls for freedom through nonviolent resistance. *Kairos Palestine* is rooted in the belief that we cannot serve God while remaining silent about the oppression of the Palestinians.¹⁰

In late 2025, the movement released a second major text, "*A Moment of Truth: Faith in a Time of Genocide*," to address the ongoing conflict and humanitarian crisis in Gaza and the West Bank. This document makes an urgent plea for Christians the world over to hear and see the lived experience of Palestinians and make an active response to the suffering in Gaza and the West Bank.¹¹

⁵ <https://embraceme.org/christians-in-israel-palestine>;
<https://imeu.org/resources/resources/palestinian-christians-in-the-holy-land/156>;
<https://cmc-terrasanta.org/en/media/terra-santa-news/35960/statistics-on-christians-in-israel>

⁶ <https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/01/23/west-bank-new-entry-rules-further-isolate-palestinians>

⁷ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=24W-kcxkdgY>
<https://www.nbcnews.com/world/israel/nun-attacked-streets-jerusalem-sparking-outcry-rcna343052>

⁸ <https://j-diocese.org/diocesan-history/>

⁹ <https://holylandjustice.org/you-cant-say-we-didnt-know/>

¹⁰ <https://www.sabeel-kairos.org.uk/kairos-palestine/>

¹¹ https://www.kairospalestine.ps/images/Final_Kairos_document_II_English.pdf

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Sarah Mullally, said recently as the Church of England adopted a resolution recognizing the *Kairos Palestine* documents, that we needn't endorse every aspect of the documents in order to pay them important attention. Citing the extreme injustices faced by Palestinians, she wrote, "Against this desperate backdrop we are called to a new and active solidarity."¹²

Affirmations

We lament and condemn all acts of violence in Israel/Palestine regardless of perpetrator and victim.

We recognize and condemn the increasing acts and attitudes of antisemitism and anti-Muslim sentiment in the United States and in our Diocese and offer support to all who are targeted for their faith or identity. We recognize Israel's existence and God's love for the people who live there and for all who consider it a sanctuary and refuge from a history of brutal persecution.

Israel's decades-long system of political, legal and military control over Palestinians has deprived Palestinians of equal rights, freedom and opportunity, harming Israelis and causing ongoing Palestinian suffering, compounded now by Israel's continuing assault on Gaza, displacement of Palestinian populations and failure to control settler violence in the Occupied West Bank.

The subjugation of one people by another is inherently unjust and unstable. No lasting peace can be achieved nor justice established until Israel's military occupation and control over Palestinians ends and Palestinians and Israelis have equal rights, freedom and self-determination. Until equality is established, violence is inevitable and security impossible.

Our faith calls us not only to pray for justice and peace but to act.

Palestinian Life prior to October 7, 2023

The State of Israel was formed in 1948 with more than 700,000 Palestinians expelled or forced to flee from their homes, beginning a pattern of unequal rights that exists through today. Palestinians living within Israel, in the Occupied West Bank and in Gaza have lived for years subject to different laws, policies and practices than their Israeli Jewish counterparts, resulting in a discriminatory form of systemic subjugation that severely limits the lives of nearly 7,000,000 Palestinians.¹³

Over the years, Palestinians have been increasingly deprived of self-determination, equal rights, natural resources, freedom of movement, peaceful dissent, and economic and educational opportunity. Things are exponentially worse since October 2023, however they have been difficult and deadly for a very long time.¹⁴

¹² <https://www.aol.ca/articles/hear-voices-inside-church-england-105236000.html>

¹³

<https://www.hrw.org/report/2021/04/27/threshold-crossed/israeli-authorities-and-crimes-apartheid-and-persecution>; https://www.btselem.org/publications/fulltext/202101_this_is_apartheid; <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/campaigns/2022/02/israels-system-of-apartheid>

¹⁴ Ibid.

Prior to October 2023:

- Palestinians in the West Bank were subject to roadblocks, checkpoints, inspections, middle-of-the-night arrests of children in their homes and daily degradations at the hands of armed Israeli forces.
- The government of Israel routinely destroyed Palestinian homes and sanctioned the confiscation of Palestinian land for the establishment of Jewish-only settlements in the West Bank, despite the fact that international law considers Israel's longstanding military occupation and its settlements to be illegal.
- Palestinians in the West Bank lived under an Israeli military legal system that provided significantly fewer rights and protections than the civilian legal system governing Jewish Israelis living in the same area. This was particularly harmful to Palestinian children who were routinely incarcerated without charges, subjected to solitary confinement and harsh interrogations, transferred across borders in contravention of international law and convicted at a rate of approximately 95%.
- Palestinians living in Gaza were under blockade since 2007, preventing the free movement of people, medical supplies and goods across the border. Prior to October 7, 2023, Gazans faced endemic poverty, unemployment, physical and mental health deteriorations and extreme hardship. Basic necessities including food, safe drinking water, electricity, fuel, sewage disposal and medical care were in insufficient supply. Ninety to 97% of the water was unsafe for human consumption and required filtration for which equipment was frequently unavailable.
- Palestinians living within Israel were subject to discriminatory laws that governed land access, planning and zoning, with unequal allocation of state resources. Segregated K-12 Jewish and Arab public schools received unequal subsidies. Palestinian citizens of Israel faced discrimination in all areas of educational, employment and economic opportunity.
- In 2018 Israel passed the Nation-State law, declaring Israel a nation-state of the Jewish people and stating that the right to exercise national self-determination belongs solely to Jews. The law declares Jewish settlements on Palestinian land a national value and promotes their growth.¹⁵

These conditions have worsened considerably.

October 7 and after

On October 7, 2023, Hamas committed a horrifying attack on Israeli civilians, killing approximately 1200 people and taking approximately 250 hostages. It was a brutal violation of the safety of individuals and the security of a society, and left behind widespread grief and terror.

In response, Israel began one of the deadliest and most destructive military campaigns in recent history, targeting Gazan civilian society. Independent researchers have reported that more than 75,000 Gazans have been killed, a number that does not include thousands suspected dead and missing under the rubble or those killed by disease and other war-related causes, including starvation.¹⁶

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Peace Research Institute Oslo: <https://www.prio.org/news/3691>;
<https://www.bmj.com/content/392/bmj.s239>

The killing in Gaza was widespread and indiscriminate. More than 500 humanitarian aid workers, 1500 health workers and approximately 270 journalists were killed. Half to two-thirds of those killed were women and children.¹⁷

Israel's extensive bombing left the built environment and infrastructure systems largely destroyed. Most of Gaza's hospitals, schools and civil society have become unable to function. Nine out of ten Gazans were driven from their homes, with many forced to move multiple times. In the midst of these conditions, Israel blocked aid to Gazans for months at a time.¹⁸ In 2024, the UN Secretary General declared, "Gaza is in a humanitarian freefall."¹⁹

A growing number of legal scholars, genocide experts and human rights organizations, including many who are Israeli or Jewish, consider Israel's relentless assaults, indiscriminate killing, destruction of infrastructure and expressions of a desire to rid Gaza of its population to constitute genocide.²⁰

Ceasefire and the current situation in Gaza

On October 10, 2025, Israel and Hamas entered into a ceasefire, however Israel has failed to abide by its terms or stop its violence against Gazans.

Six months into the ceasefire, Doctors Without Borders reported that Israel had continued to systematically violate the ceasefire through near daily attacks on Gaza and the deliberate obstruction of aid to a population already struggling on the cusp of survival.²¹

During that time Israel shot at civilians 921 times, raided residential areas 97 times, bombed and shelled Gaza 1109 times, and continued to destroy homes and infrastructure throughout Gaza.²²

¹⁷

<https://www.rescue.org/uk/press-release/palestinians-make-almost-one-fifth-aid-workers-killed-records-began>

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2026/8/9/union-reports-108-attacks-on-palestinian-journalists-in-july>

<https://www.ifj.org/war-in-gaza>

¹⁸

<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/world/un-official-calls-israels-gaza-aid-blockade-cruel-collective-punishment>

¹⁹

<https://www.unrwa.org/newsroom/official-statements/gaza-humanitarian-freefall-secretary-general>

²⁰ <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/07/15/opinion/israel-gaza-holocaust-genocide-palestinians.html>

https://www.btselem.org/publications/202507_our_genocide

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2025/07/israel-opt-israeli-organizations-conclude-israel-committing-genocide-against-palestinians-in-gaza-in-another-milestone-for-accountability-efforts/>

<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/world/leading-genocide-scholars-organization-says-israel-is-committing-genocide-in-gaza>

<https://www.phr.org.il/en/genocide-in-gaza-eng/>

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/09/israel-has-committed-genocide-gaza-strip-un-commission-finds>

²¹ <https://www.doctorswithoutborders.org/latest/palestinians-are-still-suffering-six-months-gaza-ceasefire>

<https://www.hrw.org/news/2026/05/19/gaza-israel-curbs-aid-kills-civilians-during-ceasefire>

²²

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/11/11/how-many-times-has-israel-violated-the-gaza-ceasefire-here-are-the-numbers>

By August 2026, in the approximately ten months since the ceasefire began, Israel had killed 1,288 Gazans and injured approximately four times that number. In other words, during the ceasefire, Israel has killed an average of four Palestinians a day.²³

The ceasefire established a “yellow line” through Gaza between the 58% of area under full Israeli military control and the remaining 42% where Gazans are forced to shelter in an already crowded and now badly damaged territory. The yellow line is not clearly marked and has been called a kill zone, with gunfire, airstrikes, and shelling by Israeli forces happening nearly daily. Israeli warships are also firing from the sea, trapping people with active firing on all sides. Over time, the yellow line has continued to shift westward, expanding Israel’s territory.²⁴

Although there has been some improvement in Gaza since the ceasefire, the humanitarian crisis remains. Nearly two-thirds of families live in tents or makeshift shelters that rapidly deteriorate in harsh weather as they are designed only for short-term use, according to the UN aid coordination office. More than 4 out of 5 families face critical or catastrophic living conditions, lacking fuel, energy and essential household items. Families lack water, sanitation and medicine.²⁵

Nearly 1.5 million people, two-thirds of Gaza’s population, are experiencing crisis levels of acute food insecurity, with some 212,000 people in emergency conditions. In the coming year some 74,000 children are expected to require treatment for acute malnutrition.²⁶

Over 39,000 children in Gaza have lost one or both parents and UNICEF reports that thousands more are unaccompanied or separated from their parents.²⁷

Gaza has long suffered a high rate of amputations due to Israeli violence, targeted sniping and treatment complications, but amputations have increased dramatically since 2023, often under unsafe and appalling conditions, sometimes without anesthesia. The World Health Organization estimates that there have been 5,000 to 6,000 amputations in Gaza since October 7. Children account for approximately 25% of them, making Gaza home to the highest number of child amputees per capita in the world. At one point, reports show that more than 10 children in Gaza were losing one or both legs every day.²⁸

²³ <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2026/8/24/israeli-strike-on-gaza-shelter-extends-casualty-list>
https://www.instagram.com/p/DcejZSxARij/?img_index=4

²⁴ <https://www.doctorswithoutborders.org/latest/palestinians-are-still-suffering-six-months-gaza-ceasefire>

²⁵ <https://news.un.org/en/story/2026/08/1168180>

<https://www.oxfamamerica.org/explore/emergencies/gaza-and-israel-emergency-appeal/is-humanitarian-aid-getting-into-gaza/>

²⁶ <https://www.wfp.org/emergencies/palestine-emergency>

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2026/07/1168006>

²⁷ <https://www.pcrf.net/changing-lives-in-gaza-orphan-sponsorship-in-2025>

²⁸ <https://www.palestine-studies.org/en/node/1657009>

<https://www.healpalestine.org/gazas-child-amputee-crisis-the-long-road-to-recovery>

<https://www.savethechildren.net/news/gaza-more-10-children-day-lose-limb-three-months-brutal-conflict>

<https://www.latimes.com/world-nation/story/2025-12-19/gaza-amputees-struggle-as-enclave-faces-short-age-of-prosthetics>

The Crisis in the West Bank

Since October 2023, more than 1,100 Palestinians have been killed in the occupied West Bank, including 174 children.²⁹

Israeli settler violence has skyrocketed, with the United Nations reporting an average of six to eight attacks per day, or more than more than 1400 attacks in 2026 alone.

Masked and armed settlers assault Palestinians with clubs, stones, pepper spray and guns, smashing vehicles, attacking homes and destroying land and property. Settlers employ intimidation, theft, property destruction (including olive groves and water systems) arson, and physical and mental abuse.³⁰

Settlers commit violence with the financial, material and legal backing of Israel. As settler attacks surpass record levels, the government has distributed more than 100,000 assault rifles to Israelis. Attacks by settlers often occur while Israeli army units or soldiers stand by to watch but do not interfere.³¹

Former Israeli generals and intelligence officers are among those accusing settlers of committing ethnic cleansing with government support. Israeli human rights analysts have concluded that settler aggression is an integral part of Israel's decades-long effort to push Palestinians out of their homes and off their land.³²

Settler violence has been compounded by Israel's continued settlement expansion. Settlements on Palestinian land have long been considered illegal under international law and are a source of immense provocation to Palestinians trying to subsist on the land they have. In 2026 alone, Israel approved approximately 12,360 new settler housing units, with funds allocated to support 34 new settlements.³³

The U.N. General Secretary warned that this recent expansion constitutes a "flagrant violation" of the law and an obstacle to peace.³⁴

²⁹ <https://news.un.org/en/story/2026/08/1168113>

³⁰ <https://news.un.org/en/story/2026/08/1168113>

<https://www.newyorker.com/news/q-and-a/why-israeli-authorities-are-encouraging-settler-violence-again-st-palestinians>

<https://www.doctorswithoutborders.org/latest/they-shoot-kill-settler-violence-west-bank>

³¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jfIXBxBYVMc> (Al Jazeera) Jul 31, 2026.

<https://www.hrw.org/news/2026/08/20/west-bank-israel-backed-settler-violence-drives-displacement>

<https://www.newyorker.com/news/q-and-a/why-israeli-authorities-are-encouraging-settler-violence-again-st-palestinians>

³²

https://www.nytimes.com/2026/08/31/world/middleeast/west-bank-israel.html?unlocked_article_code=1.91A.8gw4.GOQvQkdHhQWM&smid=em-share

https://www.btselem.org/topic/settler_violence

<https://imeu.org/resources/resources/5-things-to-know-about-israeli-settler-violence-against-palestinians/>
463

³³

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/campaigns/2019/01/chapter-3-israeli-settlements-and-international-law/>

<https://press.un.org/en/2026/sc16430.doc.htm>

³⁴ <https://news.un.org/en/story/2026/08/1168113>

Israel has also radically increased its control over Palestinian movement. Hundreds of checkpoints, roadblocks and mobile gates in the West Bank severely restrict Palestinian movement, separate communities and block access to jobs, schools and medical services.³⁵

Palestinian schools and health care facilities are under continuous threats, and the ability for children to receive an education or people to receive medical care is severely disrupted because of dangerous conditions.³⁶

Settler violence, settlement expansion and other restrictions on Palestinian life have led to massive displacement. One hundred and seven Palestinian communities have been fully or partially displaced since January 2023 and an estimated 3,800 Palestinians, nearly half of them children, have been displaced just this year.³⁷

The United States and Israel

Prior to October 7, 2023, the United States was committed to providing Israel approximately \$3.8 billion in military assistance every year. Since then, the U.S. has increased its military support substantially.³⁸

In the first year after the Hamas attack, the United States flew 500 flights and sent over 100 sea shipments to Israel, carrying more than 50,000 tons of bombs, rockets, small arms, munitions and other equipment to the Israeli military.³⁹ By the end of the second year, the United States had provided Israel \$21.7 billion in military aid.⁴⁰ The U.S. has also vetoed actions in the United Nations that are supportive of Palestinians, including calls for a ceasefire.⁴¹

The U.S. has laws that prohibit the provision of aid to countries that don't meet human rights standards (the Leahy Laws.) Although aid to other countries has been withheld for human rights abuses, these standards have not been generally applied to Israel, nor is the aid process transparent enough to be adequately monitored.⁴²

35

<https://www.doctorswithoutborders.org/latest/west-bank-when-two-minute-walk-hospital-becomes-hours-long-death-trap>

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2026/09/israel-opt-israel-steps-up-annexation-measures-with-unlawful-land-seizure-orders-in-the-occupied-west-bank>

³⁶ <https://reliefweb.int/report/occupied-palestinian-territory/education-under-threat-west-bank-july-2026>

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2026/09/israel-opt-israel-steps-up-annexation-measures-with-unlawful-land-seizure-orders-in-the-occupied-west-bank>

³⁷ <https://www.hrw.org/news/2026/08/20/west-bank-israel-backed-settler-violence-drives-displacement>

³⁸ <https://www.cfr.org/articles/us-aid-israel-four-charts>

39

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/israel-hamas/2024/08/26/israeli-war-hamas-gaza-updates/74950163007/>

⁴⁰ <https://costsofwar.watson.brown.edu/paper/AidToIsrael>

⁴¹ <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/what-military-support-does-us-provide-israel-2024-04-08/>

42

<https://carnegieendowment.org/research/2021/05/bringing-assistance-to-israel-in-line-with-rights-and-us-laws>

Advocacy and Antisemitism

The United States Constitution guarantees its citizens the right to advocate to their elected officials. However, advocacy regarding the United States' support for Israel has often been restrained by accusations of antisemitism.

There is broad support among scholars who study the issue and courts who have ruled on it for distinguishing between anti-Israel speech and antisemitism. When we fail to distinguish between them, Israel is left unaccountable, we lose our ability to advocate for change, and important conversations about actual antisemitism are distorted and weakened.⁴³

In April 2023, a coalition of 104 civil society organizations released a joint letter to the United Nations urging the UN to ensure its anti-antisemitism efforts, but not to adopt a definition that conflated antisemitism with criticism of Israel, arguing that doing so “restricts legitimate criticism of Israel and harms the fight against antisemitism.”⁴⁴

Scholars have also recognized the assault on essential academic freedom caused by equating criticism of Israel with antisemitism. With post-protest procedures in place at Columbia University, faculty member and prominent genocide scholar Marianne Hirsch, herself the daughter of two holocaust survivors, wrote that, “[a] university that treats criticism of Israel as antisemitic and threatens sanctions for those who disobey is no longer a place of open inquiry. I just don’t see how I can teach about genocide in that environment.”⁴⁵

Jewish Voice for Peace, one of many Jewish organizations working to end Israel’s war against Palestinians, articulates how its anti-Zionist position is not antisemitic. “We organize our people and we resist Zionism because we love Jews, Jewishness, and Judaism. Our struggle against Zionism is not only an act of solidarity with Palestinians, but also a concrete commitment to creating the Jewish futures we all deserve. We are fighting for a thriving Judaism and Jewish communities, for a multiplicity of Jewish cultures and for the future of the Jewish people.”⁴⁶

The Episcopal Church and Palestinians

As Episcopalians, we are compelled by our faith to stand up to injustice, to be peacemakers and to help the oppressed. We recognize that Israel’s ongoing military occupation and its relentless assaults on Palestinians are antithetical to the Gospel message, and that silence in light of them contravenes the pledge of our baptismal covenant.

⁴³ Beinart, Peter, *Being Jewish After the Destruction of Gaza: A Reckoning*, p.77.

<https://www.annefrank.org/en/topics/antisemitism/all-criticism-israel-antisemitic/>

<https://fpif.org/preventing-criticism-of-israel-by-defining-it-as-antisemitic/>

<https://www.annefrank.org/en/topics/antisemitism/all-criticism-israel-antisemitic/>

<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/nation/trump-cannot-deport-students-for-criticizing-israel-judge-rules>

<https://www.jewishvoiceforpeace.org/silencing-anyone/>

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<https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/04/04/human-rights-and-other-civil-society-groups-urge-united-nations-respect-human>

⁴⁵

<https://brandeiscenter.com/a-columbia-genocide-scholar-says-she-may-leave-over-universitys-new-definition-of-antisemitism-associated-press/>

⁴⁶ <https://www.jewishvoiceforpeace.org/2023/11/09/antisemitism-dangerous/>

Over the past several years the Diocese of Olympia and the General Convention of the Episcopal Church have passed numerous resolutions critical of Israel's denial of Palestinian rights, including resolutions that seek to:

- End Israel's occupation of Palestinian territories
- Establish equal rights for Palestinians and Israelis
- Oppose Israeli settlements and the demolition of Palestinian homes
- Condition U.S. military aid on Israel's compliance with human rights laws
- Protect Palestinian children from military court mistreatment
- Provide aid to Palestinians.⁴⁷

However, there has been little committed action and our attention has not been sustained.

Palestinian Christians are pleading with us now to listen to their voices and witness their suffering.⁴⁸ Recognizing the devastation to Palestinians as a faith issue, an increasing number of mainstream American and other churches are speaking out.

In 2025, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America overwhelmingly passed a strongly worded resolution calling for an end to the genocide against Palestinians, an end to military aid to Israel and support for Palestinian statehood and U.N. membership.⁴⁹

In 2025, the United Church of Christ passed a declaration for an end to genocide in Palestine, again by an overwhelming majority.⁵⁰

In July 2026, the Presbyterian Church USA voted, also overwhelmingly, to recognize Israel's war in Gaza as a genocide and to divest from two companies over their ties to Israel's military and intelligence services, while calling on members to boycott Israeli products and lobby Congress for an arms embargo.⁵¹

In July 2026, the Church of England took a strong stand with another vast majority of votes to respond to and be in solidarity with Palestinian Christians and to hear their experiences, especially as articulated in the Kairos documents.⁵²

Increasingly, churches outside the Holy Land are beginning to see and acknowledge the depth and reality of Palestinian suffering and our role in responding to it.

⁴⁷ See *Putting Previous Resolutions into Action*, passed in 2025 by the 115th Convention of the Diocese of Olympia

⁴⁸ https://www.kairospalestine.ps/images/Final_Kairos_document_II_English.pdf

⁴⁹

<https://www.christiancentury.org/news/elca-elects-first-black-presiding-bishop-calls-israel-s-actions-gaza-genocide>

⁵⁰ <https://www.ucc.org/general-synod-passes-declaration-for-an-end-to-genocide-in-palestine/>

⁵¹ <https://pres-outlook.org/2026/07/assembly-declares-israels-war-in-gaza-a-genocide/>

⁵²

<https://www.churchofengland.org/media/news-and-press-releases/synod-votes-stand-solidarity-palestinian-christians-and-hear-their-voices-amended-motion>