

Resources for Understanding the Palestinian Struggle for Justice

The following was compiled in 2021 by Maureen McPherson, St. Martin's United Church, Saskatoon SK; Rev. Brenda Curtis, minister of Westminster United Church, Humboldt SK, and Quill Lake Pastoral Charge; and human rights activist Renee Nunan-Rappard, Lanigan SK.

NOTE: Two stars indicate the material is from a Partner of the United Church of Canada. Partners are funded from the Mission and Service Fund. One star indicates the material is from a "Solidarity" Partner. The United Church collaborates with Solidarity Partners but does not fund them. A good place to begin is with the animated video *Israel and Palestine: A Very Short Introduction*. 2013. Produced by Jewish Voice for Peace. 6 ½ min.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y58njT2oXfE>

Support Palestinians by buying their products!

- "Zatoun" (zatoun.com) is a charitable organization which sells olive oil, olive oil soap, za'atar spice mix and Medjool dates.
- Dates can also be purchased at <https://palestinejusttrade.ca>
- "Touch of Grace" is a Palestinian organization that sells local crafts. Prices are in US dollars. Shipping is about an additional 25%. "Touch of Grace" also arranges tours of Israel and Palestine. (<https://touch-grace.com>)

Videos: Videos may be available at your public library or on your streaming service. Many libraries subscribe to a streaming service called Kanopy. You use your library card to create a free Kanopy account. Note: Preview videos before showing to younger audiences.

- *The Present*. Film. 2020. Directed by Palestinian-British director Farah Nabulsi and co-written by Nabulsi and Hind Shoufani. We follow a father and daughter as they attempt to buy an anniversary gift in the Israeli-occupied West Bank. Nominated for an Oscar in 2021. 25 min. Available on Netflix.
- **How Are the Children? Palestinian Children in Israeli Military Detention*. Documentary. A product of the United Church of Christ Palestine Israel Network (UCCPIN). Thomas Beilman, executive producer. (2019) 70 min. The film's dedicated website includes links to the film, a curriculum for presentation of the film and other useful resources. <https://HATCnow.org>
- ***Obaida*. Short (7 min.) documentary by Matthew Cassel. 2019. Explores 15-year-old Obaida Jawabra's experience of Israeli military arrest. From "No Way to Treat a Child Defense for Children International –Palestine" campaign. https://nwtac.dci-palestine.org/obaida_film On May 17, 2021 Israeli forces shot and killed 17-year-old

Obaida. The following is the link to journalist Amy Goodman's May 21, 2021 report for the independent news broadcast "Democracy Now!". 10 ½ min.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X3XsXOqP-go>

- ****Detaining Dreams.** Documentary about 4 children arrested in the West Bank and prosecuted in the Israeli military detention system. 2016. Produced by Amr Kawji and sponsored by the American Friends Service Committee in Chicago and Defense for Children International-Palestine. For more information about the children and the detention system, click on the link to download the study guide. 17 ½ min. https://www.nwttac.canada.dci-palestine.org/detaining_dreams
- **The Wanted 18.** Documentary. 2014. Directed by Amer Shomali and Paul Cowan. True story of the Israeli army's pursuit of 18 cows from a Palestinian collective farm. 75 min. Available free on Kanopy or for rent from the National Film Board or Google Play.
- **On the Side of the Road.** Documentary. 2013. Directed by Lia Tarachansky. Former West Bank settler Lia Tarachansky looks at Israelis' collective amnesia of the fateful events of 1948 when the state of Israel was born and most Palestinians became refugees. 83 min. <https://vimeo.com/117772052> .
- **5 Broken Cameras.** Documentary. 2012. Directed by Emad Burnat and Guy Davidi. Multi-award winner. A Palestinian father (Emad Burnat) recorded his village's resistance to the encroachment of Israeli settlements. Nominated for an Academy Award in 2013. 85 min. Available free on Kanopy or for rent from YouTube or Google Play.
- **The Law in These Parts.** Documentary. 2011. Written and directed by Ra'anan Alexandrowicz. Investigates the Israeli legal system governing the Palestinian territories. Multiple-award winner. 101 min. <https://www.thelawfilm.com>
- **With God On Our Side.** Documentary. 2010. Directed by Porter Speakman Jr. Examines the theology of Christian Zionism which teaches that because the Jews are God's chosen people, they have a divine right to the land of Israel. 82 min. Available for rent on Vimeo and Prime Video. <https://vimeo.com/ondemand/490>

Study guides:

- <https://www.united-church.ca/social-action/justice-initiatives/brave-spaces-talking-about-palestinian-childrens-rights> Series of workshops designed to invite and encourage United Church people and others to work towards a just peace in Israel and Palestine. Includes link to the video "Detaining Dreams".
- ***How Are the Children? Palestinian Children in Israeli Military Detention***. The study guide accompanies the video listed in the video section. <https://HATCnow.org>

- ****Why Palestine Matters: the Struggle to End Colonialism***. Israel Palestine Mission Network of the Presbyterian Church (USA). 2018. 108 pp. See book and website sections. <http://new.israelpalestinemissionnetwork.org/study-resources/publications>

Talks:

- Webinar with Rami Elhanan, an Israeli Jew, and Bassam Aramin, a Palestinian. Each has lost a young daughter through violence. They are the real-life protagonists in the novel *Apeirogon* by Colum McCann. (See book section.) Organized by the New Orleans branch of Hadassah in 2020. Worth listening to even if you haven't read the book. 63 min. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MCuhwBxtAwE>
- Address by Israeli writer and speaker Miko Peled given in Geneva in 2014. Peled is a former soldier turned peace activist. Author of "The General's Son: Journey of an Israeli in Palestine". 60 min. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YtklSjMq8>
- "Pay attention to nonviolence". – TEDtalk by Julia Bacha. Brazilian filmmaker Julia Bacha asks why we only pay attention to violence in the Israel-Palestine conflict — and not to the non-violent leaders who may one day bring peace. 2011. https://www.ted.com/talks/julia_bacha

Books:

- McCann, Colum. ***Apeirogon***. 2020. Novel. Based on a true story about the friendship between an Israeli and a Palestinian, each of whom had a child killed by "the other side". An apeirogon is a shape with an infinite number of sides. *Apeirogon* was long-listed for the Booker Literary Prize in 2020. 463 pp. See the webinar with the two real-life fathers in the video section.
- Abuelaish, Izzeldin. ***I Shall Not Hate: A Gaza Doctor's Journey on the Road to Peace and Human Dignity***. 2011. Dr. Abuelaish is a Palestinian doctor whose daughters were killed by Israeli soldiers on Jan.16, 2009 during Israel's incursion into the Gaza Strip. An inspirational and heart-breaking story. 237 pp.
- Nathan, Susan. ***The Other Side of Israel: My Journey Across the Jewish-Arab Divide***. 2016. In 2003 Susan Nathan, a Jewish woman, chose to move from Tel Aviv to an Arab town in northern Israel where she was the only Jew among 25,000 Muslims. 336 pp.
- Tolan, Sandy. ***The Lemon Tree: an Arab, a Jew and the Heart of the Middle East***. 2006. National Book Critics Circle Award. In 1967 25-year-old Sandy Tolan travelled to Israel to find the house his family had fled 19 years before. There he met the current occupant of the house, a 19-year-old woman whose family had fled Europe for Israel following the Holocaust. A story of hope. 400 pp.

- ***Why Palestine Matters The Struggle To End Colonialism.** 2018. Israel Palestine Mission Network of the Presbyterian Church (USA). Includes visuals, discussion guide and maps. Companion website features more resources for study. (See website section). 108 pp.
- Pappé, Ilan. **The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine.** 2006. Discusses the events between 1947 and 1949. A good place to start for the history of the conflict. 320 pp.
- Pappé, Ilan. **The Biggest Prison on Earth: A History of the Occupied Territories.** 2016. Shortlisted for Palestine Book Awards in 2017. Follows events from *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine*. 304 pp.
- Ateek, Naim. **A Palestinian Theology of Liberation: the Bible, Justice, and the Palestinian Israeli Conflict.** 2017. Rev. Ateek is a Palestinian Christian who founded the Sebeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center in Jerusalem. (See website section.) 129 pp.
- Shafir, Gershon. **A Half Century of Occupation: Israel, Palestine, and the World's Most Intractable Conflict.** 2009. In these provocative essays, Gershon Shafir asks three questions—What is the occupation, why has it lasted so long, and how has it transformed the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. 296 pp.
- Ellis, Marc. **Judaism does Not Equal Israel.** 2009. Marc Ellis, American scholar and leading authority on contemporary Judaism, makes an unyielding case that the present policies of the Israeli state cannot reasonably be defended. 256 pp.

For young people:

- Ellis, Deborah. **Palestinian and Israeli Children Speak.** Non-fiction. 2004. 111 pp.
- Ellis, Deborah. **The Cat at the Wall.** Novel. 2014. A cat sneaks into a Palestinian house that has just been commandeered by Israeli soldiers. Suggested for children 9-14. 144 pp.
- Explore this website: <https://socialjusticebooks.org/booklists/palestine/> for more suggestions.

****Prayers for Peace in Palestine and Israel - World Council of Churches:**

<https://www.oikoumene.org/en/press-centre/news/prayers-for-peace-in-palestine-and-israel>

Podcast: **Undercurrents** is an excellent podcast from MCC Ontario. Listen to Episode 5 “David and Goliath”. 27 min. <http://anchor.fm/undercurrents/episodes/Ep-5-David-and-Goliath-ee1ec8>

Blog: **Peter Larson** is an independent researcher and blogger from Ottawa with a particular interest in human rights in the Middle East. In 2012 he was awarded the Queens Diamond Medal for his educational work on Canada-Arab relations. He writes a thoughtful blog.

<https://canadatalksisraelpalestine.ca/>

Websites: Websites of United Church-funded Partners have two stars. Websites of “Solidarity” partners have one.

- <https://united-church.ca/social-action/justice-initiatives/unsettling-goods-choose-peace-palestine-and-israel> “Unsettling Goods: Choose Peace in Palestine and Israel” is an advocacy campaign working for peace and justice in Palestine and Israel. See “Brave Spaces: Talking About Palestinian Children’s Rights” in the study guide section.
- <https://unippi.org> “United Network for Justice and Peace in Palestine and Israel”. Lots of information about what is happening in Canada as well as elsewhere. Includes many links to videos, webinars, etc.
- **www.nwttac.canada.dci-palestine.org “No Way to Treat a Child Canada” is a project of “Defense for Children International-Palestine” (DCIP) and “American Friends Service Committee”. **Website includes a link to a petition for the Canadian government to pressure Israel to end the detention and abuse of Palestinian children.**
- **<https://www.dci-palestine.org/> “Defense for Children International-Palestine” is a Palestinian human rights organization focused on children’s rights.
- * <https://mcccanada.ca/learn/where/middle-east/palestine-israel/cry-for-home> A Mennonite Central Committee advocacy campaign on Palestine and Israel. Many stories and fact sheets.
- *<https://ijvcanada.org> “Independent Jewish Voices Canada” is a grassroots organization grounded in Jewish tradition that opposes all forms of racism and advocates for justice and peace for all in Israel-Palestine.
- ** <https://sabeel.org> “Sebeel” (means “way” in Arabic) is a Christian liberation theology movement based in Jerusalem. It was founded by Rev. Naim Ateek. (See book section).
- * <https://breakingthesilence.org.il> “Breaking the Silence” is an Israeli non-governmental organization which enables Israeli military personnel to recount their experiences confidentially.
- * <http://new.israelpalestinemissionnetwork.org> . “Israel/Palestine Mission Network of the Presbyterian Church (USA)”. Advocates for a just peace in Israel/Palestine. Lots of information. (See book and study guide sections.)
- * <https://www.uccpin.org> “United Church of Christ Palestine Israel Network” A wealth of information. The film listed below is a product of UCC PIN.
- <https://HATCnow.org> Dedicated website for the film “How Are the Children? Palestinian Children in Israeli Military Detention” . See video section.
- **<https://www.alaslah.org> Website for “Wi’am”, a grassroots organization based in Bethlehem which works to promote peace and justice. “Wi’am” means “cordial relationships” in Arabic.

- ** <http://www.btselem.org> “ B’Tselem works toward human rights in the occupied territories. “B’Tselem” means “in the image of” from Genesis 1:27 “and God created humankind in His image”.
- *[zatoun.com](http://www.zatoun.com) Zatoun sells Palestinian products. Includes information about Palestine.
- *<https://www.justpeaceadvocates.ca> “Just Peace Advocates”. Is a Canadian-based independent human rights organization advocating for human rights for the Palestinian people.