

A gift of hope you can offer: Olive tree saplings



The spirit of the Lord
God is upon me, because
God has anointed me to
bring good news to the
oppressed... to give them
a garland instead of
ashes, the oil of gladness
instead of mourning.

Isaiah 61

Add a subheading



To Palestinians, olive trees are much more than a source of income; they are integral to the Palestinian identity. Many families inherited their trees going back generations, so there is enormous family pride in the trees and a strong sense of rootedness in the land. The trees are tough. They are resistant to drought and can survive in poor rocky soil. So they are also powerful symbols of resilience, permanence, and resistance.



For Palestinian farmers, the olive harvest season, once a time of celebration and community, is now one of stress and fear. The significance of olive trees in the Palestinian psyche and their economic importance has made them a target for extremist Israeli settlers, who vandalize, spray, burn, and uproot the trees often with the passive or even active support of the Israeli military. The settler perpetrators are rarely brought to justice, whereas Palestinians who try to stop the destruction pay the price with arrests, injuries, or denial of access to their olive groves.

Plant an Olive Tree

The United Church of Canada partners with East Jerusalem YMCA and the YWCA of Palestine to help Palestinians plant trees for prosperity and peace. Through the national alternative gift catalogue, *Gifts with Vision*, \$25 purchases one olive tree sapling to replace one that has been destroyed. <https://giftswithvision.ca> (GWV23-06)

Zatoun, ('Palestine Peace Awareness Inc.') is a grassroots Canadian group that also offers tree sponsorships for \$20 each. <https://zatoun.com/>

Learn more about the olive harvest through a special focus offered by Mennonite Church SK and Living Skies Regional Council of the United Church. Click here for resources.