**Israel Palestine Task Force**

**Robert Atchison, Chair**

<http://mennowdc.org/committees-task-forces/>

**Members:** Bob Atchison, Tom Harder, Katie Mitchell-Koch, Esther Koontz, Elizabeth Raid, Jakob Whitson

**Purpose:**  To promote educational resources and events related to the conflict in Israel-Palestine conflict with particular focus on peacemaking, to congregations of the Western District Conference including, but not limited to, resources to understand the resolution passed at the Biennial Convention in Orlando in July 2017.  We hope Mennonites in our area will become more involved in peace and justice advocacy work related to the on-going crisis in the Middle East through our task force’s efforts.

The task force met six times since the 2018 Annual WDC Assembly.

**Activity Highlights**

* Display table at the 2018 WDC Annual Assembly with homemade hummus and Israel-Palestine publication handouts.
* Committee Chair responsibilities were transferred from Jakob to Bob. Secretary responsibilities are shared.
* Posted a response to Lisa Schirch’s article in The Mennonite - *Rethinking Mennonites’ approach to Israel and Palestine.*
* *Getting to Know Our Jewish and Muslim Neighbors:* In response to Ervin Stutzman’s, Feb. 21, 2018, MC USA letter encouraging WDC to commission a congregation to build relationship with a Jewish synagogue, an e-mail was sent to WDC congregations encouraging them to reach out and build relationships with synagogues or mosques. Manhattan Mennonite Church responded by hosting an interfaith potluck on May 19 with the Manhattan Jewish Congregation and other Manhattan churches.
* Kathy Neufeld Dunnattended Christ at the Check Point USA, on Oct 15-18, in Oklahoma City.
* Book reviews & Deli Days, a Wichita synagogue community event, were promoted through Sprouts**.**
* Display table at the WDC conference in July 2019.
* Esther Koontz and daughter Anne Marie attended Joining Hands for Israel and Palestine.
* Kathy and Esther presented a series on Israel/Palestine at Whitestone Mennonite Church on Nov. 7, 14 and 28.
* A documentary on the anti-BDS movement in America is being produced that includes an interview of Esther and her ACLU lawsuit.
* WDC Resource Commission provided a grant for publishing a task force newsletter mailed to all WDC congregations. The newsletter included Esther’s reflection on ACLU case, a book review on *Chosen* by Walter Brueggaman, reflections on Christ at the Checkpoint, and an AirBnB West Bank update.