To: Western District Conference Mennonite Churches

From: Bob Atchison, Chair - WDC Israel Palestine Task Force

Date: March 2019

Subject: WDC Israel Palestine Task Force Newsletter

It is our pleasure to offer our first-ever WDC Israel Palestine Task Force Newsletter. We invite you to distribute the newsletter to your congregation in the same way you share the *WDC Garden*.

For over 65 years, Mennonites have engaged in peacemaking in Palestine and Israel. Today, deteriorating conditions in the Occupied Territories have reached a crisis point, especially in Gaza. In 2015 the Mennonite Church USA Delegate Assembly passed a Resolution, *A statement of support for our Palestinian and Israeli partners in peacemaking.*

The resolution pleads for a better understanding of the social, economic and political context of the conflict; reflects on theological and political understandings of Israel-Palestine; and invites discerning a more just future for all peoples of Israel and Palestine.

The purpose of our task force is to provide WDC congregations the tools to implement the resolution. **We hope the enclosed newsletter assists in that endeavor**. We also remind you of additional resources available on the [**Mennonite Palestine-Israel Network**](https://mennopin.org/) **(MennoPIN)**.

Our task force is available to help congregations:

* Form relationships with Jewish and Muslim communities.
* Understand beliefs held by Christian Zionists and how our beliefs rooted in the Anabaptist tradition can contradict Zionist beliefs. http://mennoniteusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/MCC-and-Palestine-and-Israel-Booklet-September-20161.pdf.

* Consider suspending support for companies that benefit from the military occupation of Palestinian land. This includes companies such as HP and Sabra. For more information visit http://mennopin.org/information-about-bds/everyday-companies-to-boycott-and-why/

If you would like to see this newsletter continued as an on-line quarterly, please contact Western District Conference at: wdc@mennowdc.org or 316-283-6300.