

# ACT PALESTINE FORUM PRAYER VIGIL FOR PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

## Prayer Petitions for the Restoration of Hope

Sunday, 24 January 2016

*Every day in the month ahead, we continue to pray with and for our sisters and brothers in Palestine and Israel who have called for an ecumenical prayer vigil across the globe on the 24th of every month.*

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*"If you lose hope, somehow you lose the vitality that keeps moving, you lose the courage to be, that quality that helps you to go on in spite of it all. And so today I still have a dream."*

*—Martin Luther King Jr.*

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As a new year begins, we hope for a better year than 2015. We hope that the coming of Christ into the world is not just remembered in one season, but throughout the year. We hope for an end to home demolitions and violence. We hope for Gaza to be rebuilt and for a just and lasting peace in Israel and Palestine. We hope for an end to the Occupation and to the conflict. We hope that a separation wall is replaced with two countries coexisting, each free of fear and strife.

But we know that peace and justice take time. With the celebration of his birthday on January 18, we know that the words of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. are just as relevant today as they were over 40 years ago. We know that the words "we shall overcome" are echoed in "black lives matter". We know that the Palestinian refugees of 1948 are still waiting for their right to return. We know this, and we lose patience. Let us enter this new year with the faith to know that justice will have its season. But let us know that we are the instruments of peace, the voices calling for justice in Palestine and Israel, and throughout the world.

This month, we join our prayers with Christian brothers and sisters of different traditions during the [Week of Prayer for Christian Unity](#). Between January 23 and January 31, Christian communities in Jerusalem will be joining in prayer and celebrating our unity in Christ. The theme this year, based on 1 Peter 2:9, is "Called to proclaim the mighty acts of the Lord". As an international community, we give each other strength and encouragement as we work for peace and justice. Let our prayers and voices join together to celebrate the victories of justice, but continue to call for the right of justice to be for all. The prayers below are influenced by the material for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

Therefore, we invite you to use these prayers throughout the coming month. APF encourages its friends and partners to visit the [APF website](#) and [APF Facebook](#) page often to find, and also contribute, updates, photos, stories, advocacy ideas, and special prayers.

Please use and distribute the PRAYERS below.

When we feel the darkness will never end and that the light will not come again; when someone is laid off for the color of their skin; when another young man or woman loses their life by the hand of oppression; when we have lost hope,

**Be with us Lord.**

When we cannot move forward one more step; when our cries for justice fall on deaf ears; when the occupying force raids a community yet again; when our energy and hope is drained,

**Refresh us Lord.**

When we march for equality; when we protest for basic rights; when the tear gas fills the streets and homes; when we accompany each other in daily life,

**Walk with us Lord.**

When our cause is advanced; when authorities stand trial for killing wrongfully; when settlers are removed from stolen land; when we have a victory, however small,

**Celebrate with us Lord.**

When we want to give up; when our protests are reported as riots; when families sit in the cold of a demolished house; when the frustration overtakes us and despair seeps in,

**Encourage us Lord.**

When we fall back to a culture of violence, war and injustice; when we resort to the violent methods of our oppressors; when our hands are raised with stones; when we fail to love our neighbors and enemies alike,

**Forgive us Lord.**

When we misuse power; when we become complacent to the injustices filling the world; when we set ourselves apart; when we hide in the dark away from our communities,

**Unite us Lord.**

When we start each day; when we worry if we will see our sons and daughters after they leave the house; when our brothers and sisters cross checkpoints every day in order to work or learn or visit family; when we wonder when the injustice will end,

**Give us hope Lord.**

In the name of your son, Jesus Christ, the light that will overcome the darkness,

**Amen.**