



Advent 2023

Dear friends in Christ,

As we enter this Advent season, the horrific impacts of war weigh heavy on our hearts, minds, and souls. The call to pray and act for peace is a calling to hope for justice and peace among all peoples and in every place.

As we prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus, we invite you to join us in praying for peace in the land we call holy. We call, and pray for, an end to the war in Gaza, Israel, and the West Bank. We call for a ceasefire, an end to violence in the West Bank and the opening of humanitarian corridors in Gaza. Along with lifting this up in prayer, this is a message to be shared with government leaders.

Our churches have long-standing partnerships with churches in the region. In many and various ways, over the course of many years, we have been inspired by the witness offered by our partners. It is a witness for justice, peace, healing, hope, and love. Today, the Christian community in the land we call holy is working very hard to offer spiritual care; this is a daunting task as the violence and attacks generate so much mourning, fear, pain, worry, and horror.

Churches Beyond Borders has prepared an Advent prayer resource that lifts up Palestinian Christian communities and ministries and other congregations and institutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land and the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem. We invite you to use this resource to enhance your daily prayers (<https://www.anglicanlutheran.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023-CBB-Advent-Cycle-of-Prayer.pdf>).

We are concerned about the rise in antisemitic and anti-Islamic words and actions in local communities and communities across the world. We pray that all people of faith may embody peace rather than incite hate.

During catastrophes and difficulties, we are sometimes left to wonder “what can we do?” Indeed, this is an Advent theme: when stars are falling, systems failing, and the thrones seem oh so strong, where do we turn? When praying for peace, we open our hearts to God’s call. Each new day offers the opportunity to act, to learn, to reflect, to pray. We join the Psalmist in saying: Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may be saved. (Psalm 80:3)

Please join us in praying for peace in the land we call holy as one expression of your Advent journey.

Yours in Christ,



Archbishop Linda Nicholls
Anglican Church of Canada



National Bishop Susan Johnson
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada



Presiding Bishop Michael Curry
The Episcopal Church



Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Churches Beyond Borders is an ecumenical partnership in North America, or Turtle Island, which includes the Anglican Church of Canada (ACC), The Episcopal Church (TEC), the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC), and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA).