

2024

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“I Beg You . . . Bear With One Another in Love”



PROGRAM WRITTEN BY WDP WOMEN OF PALESTINE



WDP Palestine Strengthening National Committee (SNC) Workshop

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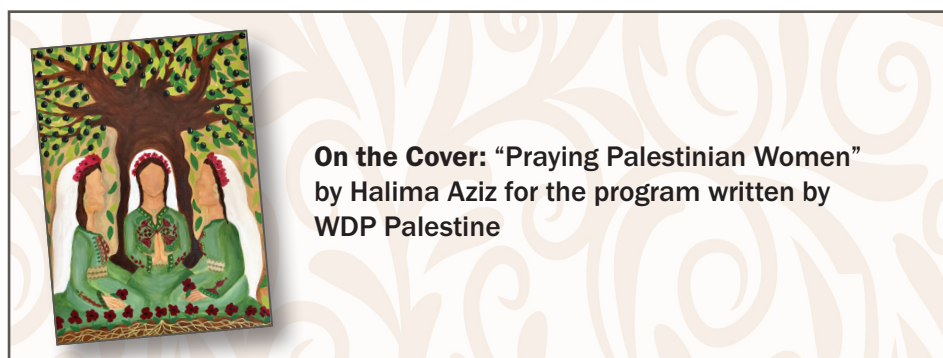
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Walking Worthy of Our Glorious Calling

BY JOYCE LARKO STEINER, PHD

“*I beg you . . . bear with one another in love.*” When this theme emerged for the World Day of Prayer 2024, drawn from Paul’s letter to the Ephesians, none of us could have known how powerfully it would speak to the devastating situations of this year. Through our Palestinian sisters’ witness, these words took on new depths of meaning as global conflicts intensified. As I reflected on this theme, watching conflicts unfold not only in Palestine but across our world, I found myself asking: Do we have real followers of Christ? Are we living by the teachings of Christ? What would Christ have done if He were here on earth with us?

I struggle to find easy answers to these questions, as I’m sure many of you do. Yet the passage from Ephesians 4:1–3 helps guide us on this journey we jointly embark on. We are called to walk worthy of our glorious calling—not through grand gestures, but through the daily practice of patience, gentleness, and humility, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Let me share a story that illuminates this truth. In a community close to the river, a rich woman consistently showed



Joyce Larko Steiner, Chairperson,
World Day of Prayer International

kindness to her poor neighbor, despite her husband’s objections. He would prevent her from sharing food, declaring their neighbors unworthy to eat what their children ate. His wife would plead, “We may be rich, but they are our neighbors. For Christ’s sake, let us help them—in times of trouble, they are the closest to us.”

When a storm broke the riverbank during the rich woman’s absence, the community initially refused to help her family because of her husband’s past

cruelty. But the poor neighbor rang a bell through the village, calling all Christians to “save a person in distress.” Through his appeal, the community came together to rescue the husband and their children—bearing with one another in love, even in the face of past unkindness.

Sisters, it is important that we live in unity. Unity is visible. Unity is not accidental. Unity requires us to merge our lives with each other, centered in God’s word. Otherwise, we are individual links who have proximity to one another but are not the united chain we are to be in Christ. As we journey through very difficult situations in all parts of the world—economic, political, social, and psychological struggles—we must remember to continue praying and striving to do what is right, even in the face of adversity.

Let us be more patient with each other. Let us be gentler with each other. Let us be humble, not thinking so much of our abilities or knowledge. Let us bear with one another because of the love we have through Christ.

May we continue to pray with and for our sisters in Palestine and have faith that one day there will be everlasting peace.

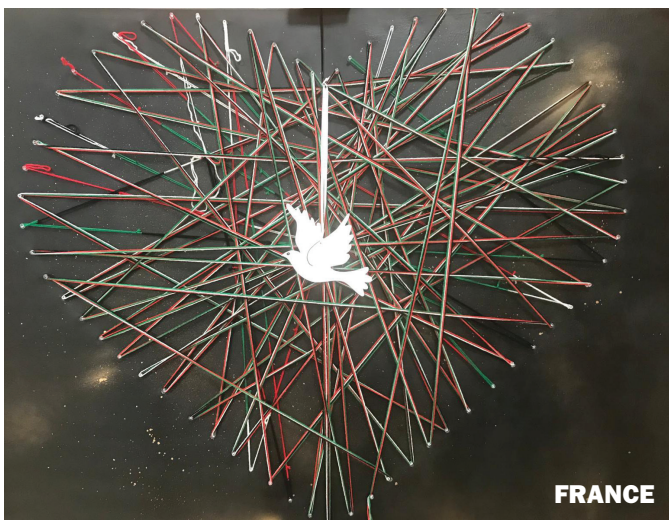
Worship Service Bible Text

EPHESIANS 4:1-7*

“I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.

But each of us was given grace according to the measure of Christ's gift.”



I Beg You . . . Bear With One Another in Love

BY WDP PALESTINE

We are deeply grateful for the unity and strength we found in coming together as women from diverse ecumenical churches across Palestine. Writing the 2024 program allowed us to share our stories, struggles, and faith in the face of ongoing challenges. Despite the unexpected war that broke out on October 7, 2023, we are thankful for the prayers and support of the global Christian community, which have given us hope and solidarity.

The Holy Spirit was our constant guide, especially during moments when we felt overwhelmed by the situation in Palestine. We felt the Spirit leading us to focus on love and resilience, reminding us of our faith in times of despair. This journey helped us find peace amidst uncertainty.

Writing the 2024 WDP program was exciting because it gave us a platform to voice our faith, culture, and experiences as Palestinian Christians. The opportunity to share our unique perspective with the world and the collaborative nature of the process were both energizing.

Initially, our understanding of the theme, *I Beg You . . . Bear With One Another in*



Love, resonated as a call for patience and mutual understanding. However, over time, it deepened into a powerful reminder of the importance of solidarity and love in the midst of conflict and division, both within our communities and with the global Christian family.

A highlight in developing the materials was getting to collaborate with women from different churches across Palestine. We shared stories of resilience and

created prayers that reflect our collective faith. Seeing how our local stories eventually resonated globally was truly inspiring.

We encourage future writer countries to embrace their unique experiences and trust that their stories will resonate globally. Focus on collaboration, and allow the Holy Spirit to guide the process, especially when challenges arise.



BEING THE FOCUS OF GLOBAL PRAYER

Being the focus of global prayer in 2024 was both humbling and empowering. In the midst of political tension and war, knowing that people around the world were praying with and for us gave us strength, reminding us of the power of global Christian unity.

Many WDP committees and organizations from around the world reached out to us with messages of solidarity, prayers, and support. These interactions were heartwarming and helped us feel connected to our larger global community of faith. Of course, it was sad to learn about things that were done by parts of our global movement without consulting us or the WDP

International Committee, particularly regarding our stories and lived realities.

The most significant challenge we faced was addressing global misconceptions about Christians in Palestine, especially post-October 7. We had to navigate sensitive topics while maintaining a message of unity and hope.

The political situation also added pressure and emotional weight to the process. Although tensions escalated leading up to the 2024 worship service, the challenges we face have long been a part of our daily lives. For this reason, we were disheartened when some parts of the movement pressed for extensive discussions about altering our program due to recent events. Our liturgy (written long before October 7, 2023) shows and

enlightens the ongoing and everyday struggles we consistently face and pray for.

Prayer brings us together, even when we see things differently. The only thing we felt moved to add was an additional prayer written in February 2024. This prayer called for strength, resilience and hope for those affected by the current war, while also asking for God's guidance to end conflicts and cultivate peace, particularly in the Holy Land. This is what we can do these days . . . be resilient in our prayers.

We received many comments of gratitude from people who were moved by our reflections on love and perseverance in the face of adversity. One particularly touching comment was from

a woman in South America who said our stories helped her see the humanity behind the conflict.

Many understood the presence of Christianity in this part of the world in a different way than it is portrayed. People have thanked us for the beautiful way of putting the liturgy, an olive tree carrying us through and telling the story of the Palestinians living in occupation.

PRAYERS ECHOING ACROSS PALESTINE

The 2024 celebration in Palestine involved prayer services, ecumenical gatherings, and workshops focused on peacebuilding and reconciliation. We used the Bible Study and PowerPoint

presentations in workshops and services, focusing on the theme of love and reconciliation. These materials helped to deepen understanding and reflection. We also had Palestinian food, and local plants. Many young women have been involved through workshops and social media outreach. These young women are interested in learning more and are constantly creative with ways of expression.

A major challenge we faced was the difficulty of gathering people from different regions in a time of heightened security concerns and travel restrictions. The political tensions also made it challenging to create a truly ecumenical celebration, but we persevered in finding ways to connect virtually and through

smaller gatherings. There were a lot of women and pastors attending and reading in some services. Some churches did not attend the services, but we hope that will change in the future.

There were three services held, one in Jerusalem, one in Bethlehem and one in Ramallah. This made it possible for everyone to join, since the difficulty of getting permits prevents Palestinians from coming together in one place. We worshiped in Arabic, English and German. Around 1,000 people attended services throughout the country, with many more participating through online broadcasts.

Offerings were collected during services, with a portion going towards supporting





local Christian initiatives and another portion being sent to WDP's Annual Contribution. Many of the offerings went to support local women organizations, such as St. Marthas, and Christian Families in Gaza.

THE JOURNEY CONTINUES

The future of WDP in Palestine looks bright, with a strong focus on ecumenical unity, peacebuilding, and continuing to share our unique voice with the global Christian community.

One lasting impact from this experience is a renewed commitment to peacebuilding and ecumenical dialogue in Palestine. The interest in coming together to pray with each other has become stronger. We are also planning to establish regular interfaith prayer meetings.

We are hopeful that the 2024 celebration will lead to a greater global awareness of the Christian presence in Palestine. We also hope this program inspires stronger ties across the global Christian community.

We are grateful for all the support from the WDP International Committee, who have lifted our voices. Their steadfast support made sure that our experiences in Palestine and Israel reached a global audience.

We ask the global movement to continue standing with us in unwavering prayer, both for and alongside us. Our hope is that this solidarity extends beyond words into prayerful action and engagement. We eagerly await continued opportunities to share our lived experiences with the world, and we extend a heartfelt invitation to all: Come, walk on our sacred soil, witness our resilience, and let your presence be a testament to our shared faith and humanity. Together, let us bridge all that divides, and nurture a future illuminated by love, peace and understanding.

WDP PALESTINE COMMITTEE

Chair: Rev. Sally Azar

Vice Chair: Shireen Awwad

Committee Member: Maureen Meo

Advisors: Nora Carmi & Aida Haddad

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/wdppalestine>



واطلب اليكم

Wa atlubu I Urge You

Lyrics based on Ephesians 4:1-2

Arabic & English by Najwa Hashweh Azazian

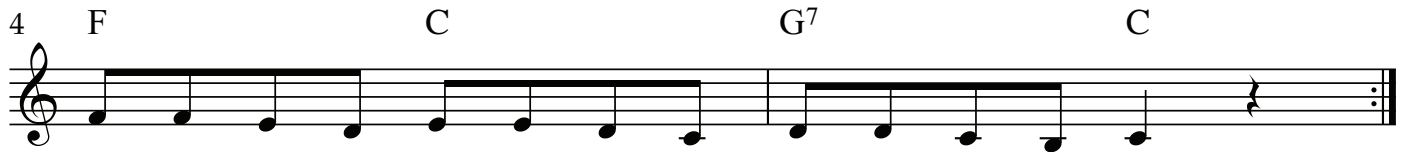
Spanish translation by Gerardo Oberman

French translation by Andrew Donaldson

Najwa Hashweh Azazian (Palestine)



Arabic: Wa at - lu - bu ei - lay - kom - An tas - lu - ku, mo - ta -
English: I urge you to be pa - tient with the cal - ling you re - ceive,
Spanish: Te pi - do que vi - va - mos en paz y u - ni - dad, y que
French: Soy - ez pa - tients et hum - bles, et par le lien de l'a - mour,



ha - me - li - na ba - da - ko - m fel ma - ha - ba - ti.
bea - ring one a - no - ther with love and u - ni - ty.
siem - pre nos cui - de - mos ya - bra - ce - mos en a - mor.
gar - dez, chers a - mis, l'u - ni - té du Saint Es - prit.

English:

I urge you to be patient with the calling you receive,
bearing one another with love and unity.

وأطلب اليكم أن تسلكوا متحملين بعضكم في المحبة

Spanish:

Te pido que vivamos en paz y unidad,
y que siempre nos cuidemos y abracemos en amor.

French:

Soyez patients et humbles, et par le lien de l'amour,
gardez, chers amis, l'unité du Saint Esprit.

Composed especially for the 2024 World Day of Prayer Palestine program.

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Middle East



EGYPT

Despite the challenges of war and threat, we prayed fervently for peace, embracing a deep sense of compassion for those suffering. The theme urged us to support one another with patience and love amid trying times. With Bible studies and moving hymns guiding us, we were grateful to the WDP Palestine

Committee for their inspired theme and service.

Inspired by the theme and the story of a pastor and his wife at All Saints Cathedral, who adopted a child with special needs born to difficult circumstances, we felt called to act. We

decided to support the Village of Hope, a center dedicated to helping young people with disabilities. Their compassion mirrored the spirit of the day, as did the remarkable work of a woman leading efforts to transform the lives of disabled youth.

“Despite the challenges of war and threat, we prayed fervently for peace, embracing a deep sense of compassion for those suffering.”

LEBANON

On March 1st and throughout the week, we celebrated the 2024 World Day of Prayer in various churches, in multiple

languages, with services for both adults and children. The chapels were beautifully adorned with Palestinian-themed

decorations, and participants wore traditional Palestinian attire. We began with a presentation about Palestine's history and current situation, followed by prayers, Bible readings, and reflections on the theme, "I beg you, bear with one another in love." This resonated deeply with us as Lebanese, given our shared Middle Eastern heritage and challenges. It was energizing to explore how we can support Palestinian human rights while navigating our historical tensions. The theme inspired us to practice love and solidarity despite hardships.

Facebook: [World Day of Prayer National Committee of Lebanon](#)



TURKEY

We decided to celebrate the worship service this year in the Syriac Orthodox Church because a lot of the members of their parish speak Arabic and Aramaic. Their choir supported the singing of hymns in the service. The choir also made a video with the help of the Bible Society of Turkey, which was included in the WDPIC Global Virtual Choir. The war in Palestine is very present in the political affairs of Turkey. Here, the fronts are very clear. It was not easy to inform people about all sides of the conflict. We were excited that the women of Palestine are



trying to find solutions to work and live together. In Turkey, where there are a lot of different religions and nationalities, it is a permanent challenge learning how to live together in peace, and learning

what steps are necessary to bear with one another in love. We are grateful that WDP Palestine reminded us we always have to put in effort and work to achieve peace in this world.

Africa



BOTSWANA

We resonate strongly with this year's theme: Botswana has high rates of gender-based violence, particularly against women, and intimate partner homicides. This violence that women face makes it challenging to embrace this year's theme, which tells us to love one another, and we empathize with the violence Palestinians are currently enduring. However, we thank the women of Palestine for reminding women everywhere that we must strive to bear with one another in love despite our circumstances.

CAMEROON

In some cities, this year's celebrations opened with peaceful demonstrations by women singing and carrying signs of protest that read, "No to injustice!," "No to



oppression!," "Yes to Peace and Justice!," "Let us support each other in Love." We reenacted scenes from the stories of the three Palestinian women – Eleonor, Lina and Sara – bringing to life the themes of oppression, exile, solidarity, compassion, and love. These themes resonated with us, as there are over one million internally displaced persons in Cameroon. We wondered: "How can one rebuild a new life far from one's roots, one's land or one's home that one had to flee because of the war and its corollary of suffering? How does one survive in a risky environment when one chooses to stay there and put into practice Jesus' command to love our neighbor as ourselves?" The stories of Lina, her Aunt Shireen, Eleonor and Sara helped us answer these questions, particularly Aunt Shireen, who was able to offer loving resistance to the oppressor and support everyone with

love. This was edifying and had a profound impact on our community.

During the Children's Program, we taught them about the olive tree, and the children understood that they too are like the branches of an olive tree, rooted in the love of God. During the Bible study, women meditated on challenges we face as a country: violence against women, gender-based violence (GBV), inflation, identity crises and more. This year, we are committed to supporting internally displaced persons and women experiencing violence, to provide them with both material and physical, moral, psychological and spiritual charity. The Palestinian women are a model of strength, courage, resilience, faith and love in the face of injustice, frustration and oppression.



DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

This year, we faced many challenges of our own, including armed conflict, political instability, currency inflation and falling commodity prices, and 7 million internally displaced people, most of whom are receiving minimal assistance. Palestine is not only important in our time but it is also a country that has existed since the Old Testament, and it shares a common ancestor with Israel, Abraham. This theme is the answer to division and instability: we are called on to support each other in love, whatever our beliefs and allegiances.

GABON

We felt challenged by the theme of bearing with one another in love in the face of oppression. Gabon felt particularly touched by this theme because we are coming out of a post-electoral crisis which ended in a military coup, and the theme allowed us to understand that supporting each other in love could lead us to a newfound social peace. The theme brought to our celebrations the awareness of women as women of faith, who can bear witness to the unconditional love of God through acts of faith. They must realize that without love,

living together, diversity, peace and justice are not possible. We want to thank the women of Palestine for their testimony, and for the work they have done in the search for peace and love in such difficult times.

GHANA

The service was hosted by the Salvation Army, and churches across Ghana joined in the celebration. Before the event, the National Committee adapted, translated, printed, and distributed materials to all churches. Women were enthusiastic about learning the history and culture of Palestine. The songs were so spiritual, and the virtual choir did a great job of inspiring the celebration. We prayed for women and children affected by the war in Israel and Palestine, with the theme being particularly relevant as Ghana faces an election year, a time historically marked by periods of violence. The celebration was beautiful, and we remain grateful for the inspiration and continue to pray for peace.

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61556260983668>





IVORY COAST

The testimony of love and the desire to find peace, expressed in the liturgy and our intercessory prayers, constitute stimulating factors for divine intervention in this part of the world. The challenges we faced were not to pass judgment but to implore God's grace on his children in Israel and Palestine, two countries at war. We must persevere in prayer, until the will of the Lord is accomplished, and Jesus Christ is glorified. The message of true love that we are called to live and transmit to those around us is a source of strengthening our love for our savior God Jesus Christ and for our neighbor. We give infinite thanks to our sisters in Palestine, who made us experience the gestures of love recommended by Christ himself.

Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/UfemuciNationale225/photos/?ref=page_internal&mt_nav=o&rdr

MADAGASCAR

What made this event particularly exceptional, and touching, was its direct coincidence with the situation in Gaza. This year's focus on prayer for Palestine felt like a divine intervention, an inexplicable act of the Holy Spirit. This timing touched us deeply, illustrating how God used this event to address such a poignant and urgent situation.

This year's theme also resonated deeply with the political situation in Madagascar. The presidential elections

have generated a lot of discord, dividing politicians, populations and even Christian communities. We interpreted this as a call from the Spirit of God to regain unity and support one another in love, thus strengthening our faith and national solidarity.

This year, the history of Palestine was presented and we also organized Bible studies to deepen our knowledge.

To you, Christians of Palestine, although few in number in your country and constantly faced with the anxiety and torments of war, never forget that you are





“To you, Christians of Palestine, although few in number . . . and constantly faced with the anxiety and torments of war, never forget that you are a light that shines in the darkness . . .”

a light that shines in the darkness, and your love for your country is admirable. Thank you for your perseverance, your firmness and your testimony. Despite the trials you experience, you keep faith in Jesus Christ, our Savior.

MALAWI

The theme for this program was relevant in a global sense, and to ensure women in our country fully understand and embrace it, we translated it into Chichewa, Tumbuka, and Chinkhonde. Our main and first event of the year

was held on the first Friday of March. Every year we invite the First Lady of the Republic of Malawi, and we are always honored to have her attend, as she did for this year’s program along with other high-ranking officers from various sectors. This year, we had over 2,000 women join us in prayer on the opening day.

MAURITIUS

We held the 2024 WDP worship service as written by the women of WDP Palestine. Children sang “I Urge You,” and we incorporated Palestine symbols into

our decorations to enhance the atmosphere. The service featured Aramaic prayers, virtual choirs, and olive branches exchanged during the sign of peace. A commemorative card with a prayer was also distributed during the service. Despite challenges that arose due to the conflict, the theme of mutual support resonated. Our gratitude goes to the WDP Palestine committee for their inspiring work, and to you our sisters in Christ, we say God has been your help in ages past, your hope for years to come. He’ll be your shelter from the stormy blast. Your guard while troubles last. And your eternal home (Psalm 90).





NIGERIA

The theme was timely, based on the circumstances that surround Palestine, which also affect other nations of the world. We prayed for our Palestinian sisters, as well as offering up other intercessory prayers. It is our prayer that God will help us to bear one another in love and do more for the Lord. Adding color to this year's service was our celebration of the fifth anniversary of our WDP Committee of Nigeria at the national level.

REPUBLIC OF CONGO

WDP was celebrated in over 20 cities and villages. The liturgy was the highlight of the event. It was, however, challenging to engage many Congolese women and coordinate with various ecumenical churches in Congo-Brazzaville while honoring the Palestinian theme, especially since Palestine was at war. The theme deeply resonated with us, as we also share in experiences of political violence, making love an important message to spread. We used additional resources for related events, including the children's service led by the Salvation Army, which was thoroughly enjoyed by participants. We commend the Palestinian women for their strong, hopeful message of love amidst adversity.



SEYCHELLES

We celebrated WDP on Mahé and Praslin Islands of the Seychelles. This year's theme raised awareness of the need for prayer, and also the current situation in Gaza. We prayed for the wellbeing of Palestinian women and for peace in the region. The exchange of peace was done with scented leaves of medicinal plants, which were handed out before the service. Participants were asked to take the leaves to their homes, introducing peace. Photographs from Palestine were exhibited in the church porch, and PowerPoint slides were used prior to the service. The Bible Study was taken up by the Mothers Union Group, and conversation was enriching. Another topic of discussion was leadership by women worldwide, and we are working towards introducing more young women into the WDP movement through the celebration of the service.

SIERRA LEONE

Sierra Leone celebrated WDP at the historic St John's Maroon Church in Freetown. This year's theme, and the events in Palestine, served as a sobering reminder that the issues affecting women and children are universal, and it inspired awareness of the need for

further community engagement nationwide with the aim of promoting peace. This year, we were unable to hold the service in the countryside due to political instability. In fact, the theme of 'bearing with one another in love' was a timely one in Sierra Leone due to electoral corruption and voter disenfranchisement, and as a Committee, we were responsible for networking with other organizations to promote peace through the media. As part of our outreach efforts, we visited the Freetown Cheshire Home for disabled children and the School for the Deaf and Dumb and donated provisions.

SOUTH AFRICA

WDP members eagerly anticipated this year's celebrations and were excited to organize the day of prayer that was, for many churches, their first since the Covid pandemic. Turnout was higher than expected, and service booklets were printed in 10 languages. This year, we also had our first combined national services with the South African Council of Churches in Soweto. Members have expressed a desire to expand the reach of WDP in their respective areas, and we have created branded golf shirts, scarves, bags and pins to increase visibility. The theme this year, which encourages tolerance, resonated with us, as our country



SIERRA LEONE



SOUTH AFRICA

grapples with gender-based violence, high crime rates, political unrest and high levels of unemployment. The offerings collected will be directed toward providing shelter and food to those in need, youth development programs, and organizations tackling gender-based violence.

Website: <https://wwdp.org.za/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61550701302777>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/womensworlddayofprayer/>

TANZANIA

What was particularly energizing and exciting about this year's WDP

was knowing that the liturgy was prepared by women from Palestine. This added a deeply touching and meaningful dimension to the event, as it highlighted global solidarity and shared faith among women from different parts of the world. We were deeply touched by the Palestinian women's dedication to preparing the liturgy this year, and are inspired by their perseverance during this conflict. This year's theme resonated powerfully with many participants, emphasizing the importance of love and unity, fostering a spirit of solidarity in shared faith within the religious community and encouraging patience, humility and compassion within the nation at large. The death of former President Ali Hassan Mwinyi posed a

particular challenge to the scheduling of this year's service. The main service in Dar Es Salaam was broadcast on Upendo TV, and many people shared it through social media. We received many comments from women who watched the livestream. We ask that God grant strength, courage and guidance to our Palestinian sisters during these trying times. Their dedication to WDP inspires us all, and we are grateful for their partnership in spreading love and unity across the globe.

“[Our Palestinian sisters’] dedication to WDP inspires us all, and we are grateful for their partnership in spreading love and unity across the globe.”



TANZANIA



TOGO

TOGO

Through WDP, the women of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Togo shared the concerns of the Palestinian women who prepared the liturgy and learned about the country's troubles. The celebration was also an opportunity to get to know Palestine's liturgical traditions, their songs and their way of reading the Bible. This year's theme sparked a conversation around the challenges of bearing with one another in love in an increasingly individualistic world where it can be difficult to reach out to others. Yet, we agreed that by giving a little love, we can create a climate of peace that the Palestinians currently need. This communion of prayer allowed us to share the joys and sorrows of our sisters far away, and affirmed our belief that prayer and action play an essential role in the world and cannot be dissociated. The same faith unites us and leads us to act. So, like the Palestinian women, let us dare to move forward.



ZAMBIA

ZAMBIA

Given the ongoing conflict in Palestine, the theme felt particularly moving. While some initially had mixed feelings about celebrating the service due to the war, after clarification and guidance, the celebrations proceeded smoothly. The theme highlighted the importance of love, forgiveness, and unity in difficult times, making a significant impact on attendees. Our main service was broadcast live on YouTube and national television. We also utilized the children's materials in Sunday school programs, enriching their spiritual experience. We extend our heartfelt thanks to the women of Palestine for their courage in preparing such a timely and impactful theme, which inspired prayers for peace.

ZIMBABWE

We celebrated the program with a lunch-hour service, while various churches hosted additional services throughout the country. A highlight of the event was a prayer session with a Palestinian guest speaker, bringing more awareness to the situation. Despite facing challenges, the theme encouraged solidarity and empathy during difficult times. Around 800 services were held nationwide, attended by approximately 8,000 people, with the program translated into Shona and Ndebele. We are grateful to our Palestinian sisters for their powerful testimonies and theme, which reminded us of the importance of supporting each other in times of hardship.



ZIMBABWE

Asia



HONG KONG

“[We] worked to dispel myths commonly held among the women surrounding the notion of the Holy War . . . maintaining that the war . . . is not a holy one.”

HONG KONG

This year’s global prayer penned by the women of Palestine held special significance in Hong Kong. Rev. Phyllis Wong delivered a sermon emphasizing the need to love and bear with one another in love, urging listeners to be witnesses of justice. She also reminded the congregation to remember refugees and foreign domestic workers in Hong Kong, encouraging them to speak up for the oppressed and live out God’s will. The women’s stories and their resilience conjured an image of the leaves of an olive tree, commemorated by bookmarks inscribed with “Salaam al Massih” (Peace of Christ) to honor our commitment to walk with all women, especially those oppressed, subjected to violence, or discriminated against, and to strive for peace and justice.

INDIA

WDP in India this year was a transformative event. Educating members and church leaders about the nature of the conflict between Palestine and Israel presented an initial challenge, which was addressed through informative seminars. The WDP Committee worked to dispel myths commonly held among

the women surrounding the notion of the Holy War and Israelis as the “chosen race,” maintaining that the war between Israel and Palestine, which involves the suffering of our fellow Christians, is not a holy one. We gave seminars and talks to educate our women and church leaders. It was both challenging and difficult,



INDIA

but with wisdom from God, the help of experts, and the sharing of facts helped us to reach the goal. The annual theme, 'bear with one another in love,' created a feeling of solidarity among the women, as India is a country of many religions, ethnicities, creeds, classes, and operates under a caste system. This reminded us that no one is superior to another. We are indebted to our sisters in Palestine for creating a meaningful worship order. It was relevant, thought-provoking and blessed. We hope and pray that the war ends soon.

Website: <https://ncci1914.com>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/nccionline/>



JAPAN

Before WDP this year, the significance of the chosen theme was unclear. However, as the situation in Palestine has unfolded, we have come to understand that these words are important now more than ever. The story of Shireen Abu Akleh, a Palestinian-American journalist who was gunned down by Israeli forces in May of 2022 while reporting on a Palestinian refugee camp in the West Bank, was shocking and stayed with us. We were reminded that this has been the same state of affairs in Palestine ever since the "Nakba", which translates to 'catastrophe' in Arabic, during the Arab-Israeli War of 1948. "Nakba" was a traumatic event during which hundreds of thousands of Palestinians were

violently dispossessed and displaced from their homeland, their society destroyed and their culture, identity and political and national rights suppressed in what some human rights scholars deem an apartheid that continues to this day. Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution, a world-class "Peace Constitution," renounces war, but a recent push to reinterpret and amend it suggests we are drifting away from pacifism towards a self-defensive military policy. WDP services this year were a cry to Christians around the world to take action and seek peace.

Website: <http://cloister171.blog.fc2.com/> and www.ncc-j.org

NEPAL

We celebrated World Day of Prayer with a powerful program of unity, prayer, and reflection. Despite being from different churches and faiths, participants gathered in prayer alongside the Asian Church Women's Conference (ACWC) Nepal. The event began with hymns and songs focused on God's love, healing, and the struggles of sisters, children, and families worldwide, particularly in Palestine and Israel. We reflected on global challenges like war, food insecurity, and health crises, with the theme of "I Beg You . . . Bear With One Another in Love" guiding us. The prayers centered on the suffering in Palestine, Israel, Ukraine, and Russia, with a call to build God's



“We’re deeply thankful to WDP Palestine for helping us understand their struggles, making this years’ service particularly moving.”



organizing separate ones later. Some services were broadcast on YouTube, to reach a larger audience. We’re deeply thankful to WDP Palestine for helping us understand their struggles, making this years’ service particularly moving.

Website: <http://kcwu.org/>

peace. We were inspired by the prayers and solidarity from Palestinian sisters and uplifted by shared testimonies of Jesus’ healing power. It was a blessed time, uniting missionaries in prayer and hope for a peaceful world. We thank God for this opportunity and the chance to work together in His vineyard.

SINGAPORE

Singapore is a multiracial and multireligious society, so the theme this year had a powerful impact on the women. This year, the participation of the Christus Cantores youth choir was a joy and privilege, and made the service particularly special. We are grateful for the beautiful

song that was composed—I Urge You, by Najwa Hashweh Azazian. It was a beautiful composition and a calling so close to our hearts as believers.

SOUTH KOREA

This year, we celebrated the WDP program with more dedication and attendance than before. The most meaningful aspect was our heartfelt prayers for peace in Palestine, especially for the suffering women, as we worshiped with full hearts. Many people who were previously unaware of Palestine’s situation now understand and are committed to praying for peace in the future. Services were held nationwide, with some regions

SRI LANKA

WDP in Sri Lanka was enlightening this year, particularly the opportunity to know more about Palestine, their current situation, and their resiliency. Sri Lankan members expressed their gratitude to the women in Palestine for increasing their knowledge of the war and turning our attention to Palestine’s position in the Middle East. The challenge was to actually ‘bear with one another in love,’ which means to be conscious of each other’s strengths and weaknesses, patiently walking alongside them in love. Members came away from this eye-opening service with the intention to pray more fervently for Palestine.

*“We learned that ‘bearing’”
in Arabic means ‘carrying,’
and is also used to describe
a pregnant woman.”*



TAIWAN

The focus for prayer this year was Palestine, which happened to coincide with the outbreak of the Israeli-Gaza war. In most people's minds, they are relatively familiar with the Israeli nation. Therefore, they often unconsciously agree with Israel's actions during the Israeli-Palestinian war, while ignoring the long-term conflicts and contradictions between Israel and Palestine. Through WDP, we had the opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of the situation, recognize the long-term problems between Israel and Palestine, and truly understand the difficulty of living a

life of love and tolerance for each other. We were deeply moved by the stories of three Palestinian women, who stood strong in the midst of persecution and their land being occupied.

We were happy to have so many young women with us, who imbued the services with creativity. We learned that 'bearing' in Arabic means 'carrying,' and is also used to describe a pregnant woman. Women not only carry the physical burden of child bearing, but also shoulder heavy responsibilities in the midst of patriarchal societies. A reporter from

the Chinese Christian Tribune published an extensive report on the WDP service, which has been read by over 3,200 people.

Websites: <http://women.pct.org.tw/ministry.aspx>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/WDPTaiwan>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100064689012734>

Caribbean and North America



BAHAMAS

WDP worship services were held across the Bahamas with enthusiasm and joy. The highlight was the distribution of olive branches, and on some islands, the blessing of olive oil, symbolizing our solidarity for peace and justice. We give God thanks and praise for a revived interest in our movement. Group leaders were motivated to meet and participate, and there was a new energy level this year. We were excited to have a television broadcast on the World Day of Prayer. It was moving to receive hand-made poppies from veterans for the

ANTIGUA

We gathered for a meaningful service attended by 80 participants. The program centered on a profound theme that resonated with global challenges. Bible study sessions prepared members for the significance of the World Day of Prayer, fostering deeper understanding and connection. Bringing people together for worship holds a bond of love and peace. It engages at the very core of one's being and sheds light and hope for humanity. The atmosphere at both the midday and evening services was one of serenity mixed with fervor knowing that we can reach our sisters even through distance in love and prayer.



“Coming together in Christ and praying for the wellbeing of those affected is more important than our political differences.”



CANADA

The theme this year held an uplifting message in light of the conflict in the region, reminding us that coming together in Christ and praying for the wellbeing of those affected is more important than our political differences. A moving aspect of this year's celebrations was the inclusion of Kids Pray Too! in the service video, which brought to the fore the voices of children and what peace means to them. We would like participants to conceptualize WDP as a movement rather than a one-day event, and want to remind members that groups can hold services at any time.

We are grateful to our sisters from Palestine for writing an inspiring service based on a theme that may have been difficult to embrace, given the conflicts between Palestine and neighbors.

Website: www.wicc.org
 Facebook: [@WICCanada](https://www.facebook.com/@WICCanada)
 X: [WICC_CA](https://twitter.com/WICC_CA)

BARBADOS

We celebrated with an evening service that brought together several denominations, including Anglicans, Methodists, the Salvation Army, Moravians, Nazarenes, and Roman Catholics. It was exciting to see more young people join the services this year, which brought new energy to the event. However, one challenge we faced was encouraging new churches to host the services. The theme, “I Beg You . . . Bear With One Another in Love,” fostered a sense of camaraderie among those involved in preparing the services, leading to many new friendships. A heartfelt thanks to the WDP Palestine Writer Committee from all of us in Barbados!

service. The women showed their support for Palestine by wearing black to the service. Background materials were distributed and discussed during meetings. We are grateful and appreciative to the Writer Country. Through challenges and hardships, they remained focused and resilient in preparing the materials for 2024, and their emphasis on peace, justice and reconciliation was inspiring.

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/329854851729229/>



GUYANA

We held services in seven out of our ten regions, with the main event held in Georgetown. The theme deeply resonated as we reflected on the struggles of Palestinian women, inspiring us to cultivate empathetic and understanding environments. The event brought a powerful sense of unity, especially as we prayed for Palestine amidst their current conflict. Though there were challenges, the service was uplifting, with reflections on the Bible study and other materials. We extend heartfelt thanks to WDP Palestine for their timely and impactful message, which has inspired many to take these lessons back to their communities.

“Whenever we omit love, then grudges, resentment and hate threaten to overwhelm us.”



JAMAICA

It was particularly moving to reflect on the service written by women in Palestine, who created it long before the current conflicts in their region escalated. The resilience deeply touched us. The theme felt like a reminder of the importance of tolerance, equality, and loving our neighbors as ourselves.

We held church services in five locations across the island and we used the country background and photographs in preparation. To WDP Palestine, we extend our heartfelt thanks for their honesty and vulnerability. We empathize with their struggles and pray for peace and justice.



MONTSERRAT

It was powerful knowing that the topic was selected in 2017, given its relevance today with all that is happening in Palestine. In the midst of several geopolitical conflicts brewing globally, we were prompted by God's will to love one another, and we pray for world peace.

The speaker reminded us that even when others wear on our patience, we should always remember that we are one in the household of God. We cannot put out fire with fire. Whenever we omit love, then grudges, resentment and hate threaten to overwhelm us.

“The strength and foresight of the writers was perfect for such a time as this.”



UNITED STATES

There were many services held throughout the United States, and we enjoyed sharing and learning together about Palestine and its history. There is so much division throughout our country about many issues, including support for Palestine, so this year's theme was timely and appropriate, reminding us to bear with one another in love. The strength and foresight of the writers was perfect for such a time as this. The stories of women across the history of Palestine was powerful. Our goal is to empower younger women not only to be part of WDP but also to lead WDP services within their respective communities and churches.

Website: <https://wdp-usa.org/>
 Facebook: <https://facebook.com/WorldDayOfPrayerUSA/>
 Instagram: [@wdpusa](https://www.instagram.com/wdpusa)

ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES

With the theme, “I Beg You . . . Bear With One Another in Love,” we were reminded of God’s grace and the importance of extending love and mercy to one another. The similarities between our shared agricultural heritage and cultural values as women energized our gatherings, reinforcing our strength and faith. However, the challenge of mobilizing people and churches for this event highlighted the need for deeper collaboration. A heartfelt thanks goes to the WDP Palestine Committee for creating a program that resonated profoundly, reminding us of the closeness we share through prayer and the unifying power of love.

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

This year’s vibrant service was held in the St. Francis Anglican Church in Bon Accord, and consisted of prayers, readings, hymns and storytelling. Congregants exchanged olive branches while singing “Let There be Peace on Earth,” and the service was followed by the sharing of food and drink. The meditation was presented by a lively Presbyterian minister and young woman, Reverend Sanya Beharry. Everyone present felt that the theme, which touched on forgiveness, was relevant in light of problems currently affecting Tobago, namely a rise in violent crime and a decrease in participation in family life.

Europe



ALBANIA

We celebrated the World Day of Prayer in different churches around Albania, as well as in homes for the elderly. We did not know very much about the history of Palestine, and it was energizing to learn more about this. It was challenging when people asked why we were praying specifically for Palestine this year, and we had to explain that the materials were prepared before the most recent conflict started. The theme this year resonates with the situation in our country because we are very close to the conflict between Kosovo and Serbia. We spoke a lot about peace during our services, noting that we should bear with one another in love. Before the services, we did some crafts together. We are grateful to WDP Palestine for all they have done. Everything was excellent and we will keep them in our thoughts, hearts and prayers. We are grateful that Care for Albania, a Christian foundation, supports the WDP activities in our country. More than 50% of our population is atheist, a result of living for 50 years under a

dictatorship regime. For the last 30 years, we are free to believe, and we continue trying to change our system to a democracy, but we still have a high percentage of unemployment and corruption in government.

AUSTRIA

WDP Austria has been supporting the well-known Palestinian peace activist and author Sumaya Farhat Naser, because we appreciate her important work with pupils and young people in the field of de-escalation and peace as well as the empowerment of women. Through her books and project reports, we are informed about the difficult situation in Palestine, and we looked forward to sharing this with the Austrian public through our materials, public lectures and talks. Many women commented in the feedback form that people were thankful to get more information about the country and the situation of women. Many also mentioned that they remembered very well the WDP celebrations of 1994, and many groups liked this



year's songs very much! Also, we recommended the Bible Study by Ulrike Bechmann and Viola Raheb.

At the beginning of 2023, we were very much looking forward to the celebrations, not yet aware of how much worse the situation would become for Palestinian women. This time, the celebration was much more difficult and controversial than in 1994 due to the Oct 7, 2023 attack, a day that changed everything. We ended up in the crossfire, being accused of anti-Semitism because of the liturgy from WDP Palestine. This accusation came from an online article published in Germany, which was picked up by the Austrian public radio station and television. One reason for this accusation was a lack of understanding about WDP. Most of the journalists and many theologians criticized the liturgy without having even read it, just referring to the online article. We sought dialogue with the critics, and eventually found a solution which allowed us to celebrate the original version of the liturgy from our Palestinian sisters. By the end, we



BELGIUM



CZECH REPUBLIC

received more support than criticism from both our WDP women as well as others in Austria.

The situation in Austria was definitely not easy this year, but we are grateful from the support from WDP Palestine, who of course are suffering the most. We appreciated WDP Palestine's gratitude, expressed in a letter, thanking Austria for sticking to the liturgy. This was a sign for us that we made the right decision in a challenging time.

Website: <http://weltgebetstag.at/>

Facebook: [@weltgebetstagderfrauen](https://www.facebook.com/weltgebetstagderfrauen)

BELGIUM

Celebrations were held in eight churches across our country. The program highlighted the resilience of the

Palestinian people striving for a better future. However, celebrating the liturgy during the ongoing political crisis was challenging, as we felt the weight of their struggles. The theme emphasized the need for peace and understanding in a country like ours, full of differences. Though we didn't broadcast services this year, we used materials like Bible studies, country backgrounds, and PowerPoint presentations during our national gatherings and services. We deeply appreciate the testimonies shared by Palestinian women through this service.

CROATIA

WDP was celebrated with services across multiple cities, including Zagreb, Rijeka, Osijek, Bjelovar, Vinkovci, and

Vukovar. For the first time, we hosted an online service via Zoom, uniting women from five countries. During the preparations, we had the opportunity to visit the sisters from WDP Slovenia – that meeting was very inspiring and filled with joy. It was also encouraging to feel how the difficulties we encountered during the preparations strengthened our love for WDP. We aimed to promote understanding and peace through lectures and prayers for women, children, and others suffering in that region. We are grateful for the inspiration from WDP Palestine's perseverance and openness.

Facebook: [Svjetski molitveni dan Hrvatska—World day of prayer Croatia](https://www.facebook.com/Svjetski.molitveni.dan.Hrvatska)



CROATIA



CZECH REPUBLIC

This year the World Day of Prayer in our country was marked by both challenges and a call for unity. Due to the ongoing Israel-Palestine conflict, many services were canceled, and political tensions affected public interest. However, the theme carried a powerful message of tolerance and hope for peace, resonating with those who participated. While no services were broadcast on media platforms, we utilized the children's program for holiday camps and incorporated the country background information with photos. Despite the difficult circumstances, we express our deep gratitude to the Palestinian women who contributed to this year's program, understanding the significant challenges they face.

DENMARK

WDP services were held in various cities across Denmark. Some found it good to pray for Palestine, but sadly, others were upset and refused to use the liturgy. We are grateful to the Christian women in Palestine for sharing their faith and fears with us. Many Christians in Denmark associate strongly with Israel, which

made this year's celebration and theme difficult, of bearing with each other in love.

In Copenhagen, it was the Methodist Church's turn to host the celebration this year. There was a good advertisement on the front page of our newspaper, Politiken, the day before, a gift we were grateful for. This year, we chose to start with a conversation around the coffee table, with homemade buns and apple pie. Following this time of sharing, we began the service. The life stories from Palestinian women were each very moving to us. We concluded with St. Francis of Assisi's prayer, "Make me an instrument of your peace."

Website: www.kvindebededag.dk

ENGLAND, WALES & NORTHERN IRELAND

Our country embraced the program this year with great enthusiasm, hosting over 1,800 services nationwide. The theme drew in participants who might not have otherwise engaged and inspired us to approach even opposition with patience and understanding. Discussions before and after the services energized attendees, sparking heightened interest

and participation. While some resistance posed challenges, it also highlighted the importance of listening and fostering dialogue.

The use of supplementary materials enriched our observance, with PowerPoint presentations, photographs, and children's resources playing a central role. These tools enhanced around 30 preparation days and were widely shared in churches and schools. We extend heartfelt gratitude to WDP Palestine for their courageous and tenacious work.

Website: wwdp.org.uk

Facebook: [@WorldDayOfPrayerEWN](https://www.facebook.com/WorldDayOfPrayerEWN/)

X: [@WWDPforEWN](https://twitter.com/WWDPforEWN/)

ESTONIA

World Day of Prayer was marked with gatherings across various towns, with major events in Tallinn and Pärnu.

Tallinn's longstanding ecumenical choir, active for nearly 30 years, added a special touch to the services. While political situations led to some challenges, the commitment to prayer and reflection remained steadfast. We share our thanks to WDP Palestine for a great job done on this worship service program.



FINLAND

FINLAND

We celebrated the program with a devotional service at Tampere Old Church, bringing together 38 attendees. The theme felt particularly poignant given the current global climate. The ongoing conflict between Palestine and Israel posed challenges but it also made the theme of unity and love even more resonant. We only held one service, organized by the YWCA of Tampere, and translated the program into Finnish. A special moment came when we

received an additional prayer from the WDP Palestine writer committee, which touched our hearts. We're grateful for their thoughtful contribution and the way it deepened our devotional experience.

FRANCE

The program this year was a deeply meaningful experience. We embraced the worship text fully and the ecumenical collaboration brought joy and spiritual communion, encouraging women to continue these exchanges throughout the year. However, organizing the event was challenging due to the sensitive political climate. Despite concerns about security, we were committed to honoring the original worship text, and the result was powerful. The generosity and emotional response of the attendees were particularly moving. The theme offered us a lesson in humility, unity, and love. We are immensely grateful to the Palestinian women for their moving testimonies, their tolerance, and the powerful message of peace and love they shared. Their words left a lasting impact on us all.



FRANCE



GERMANY

Website:

<https://journeemondialedepriere.fr/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/JourneeMondialeDePriereFrance>

GERMANY

World Day of Prayer was celebrated ecumenically in most communities throughout Germany, in solidarity with the women in Palestine. This was a very challenging year for WDP in Germany. We are painfully aware that Germany is the main reason for the founding of the state of Israel, which followed the expulsion and mass killing of Jews in Germany. This year's program also meant a special challenge for the Protestant churches in Germany, since many of these churches have declared a guilty plea, admitting their complicity in this history. They feel obliged to show unconditional solidarity to Israel, although what is meant by "Israel" is not always clearly defined. In addition, the evangelical currents in these churches absolutely prioritize the "Chosen People," which they justify biblically and theologically. With this background, positive statements about Palestine are quickly described as anti-Semitic, anti-Israel and anti-Judaism.



The October 7, 2023 attack by Hamas was a great challenge for us in Germany, and led to attempts to use WDP as a political instrument. Absolute solidarity with Israel came to the fore, and demonstrators were criminally forbidden to use the slogan, “from the river to the sea.” There was also a threat that churches in Germany would forbid and lock their doors to WDP services. Throughout all of this, we remained absolutely clear that the liturgy from WDP Palestine was not anti-Semitic. However, a renewed contextualization became necessary as we looked for a way to make the Palestinian voices heard.

We will truly remember this World Day of Prayer 2024. In all of the services, people attending celebrated that the WDP demonstrated a defiant solidarity with our Palestinian sisters. Many were moved by how WDP Palestine wove the olive tree into their prayer order, a wonderful symbol of their lives. This service did not only get under our skin, but also through our hearts, and we were deeply touched.

Website: <https://weltgebetstag.de/en/>
 Facebook: [@weltgebetstag](#)
 X: [@weltgebetstagD](#)
 Instagram: [@weltgebetstag](#)

IRELAND

Given the distressing situation that continues in Palestine and Israel, this year's message and theme was prophetic. The chant that was composed especially for this service emphasized the theme and it was very easy for people to learn, being scriptural and singable. We need God's grace to help us bear with one another in love, especially in these times. We had a significant increase in donations this year, and our local groups requested that we give most of the financial support to Palestinian families, women and children.

We did experience some tension this year as we prepared the service for our national broadcaster, RTE. The text had to be examined by their legal team in order to ensure fairness in reporting and avoid any litigation from any individual viewers or organizations. We were relieved that RTE decided to go ahead with the transmission of the service without changing any of the words of the text. We really wanted the authentic voices of the Palestinian women to be heard in their entirety. We did add some prayers specifically for Israel, and also encouraged local branches to use Archbishop Justin Welby's prayer during

their service, praying for all the people of the Holy Land – Israeli, Palestinian, Jew, Christian and Muslim. We had a wonderful school choir from Co Meath leading us in song, and we learned later that over 38,000 people had tuned into the program, way above any number we had anticipated. We think many people were interested because of their outrage and sadness about the war in Gaza.

Website: <https://www.wdpireland.org/>
 Facebook: [Women's World Day of Prayer Ireland](#)

ITALY

Our country's celebration was a meaningful and reflective occasion. Churches of various denominations—Methodist, Catholic, Pentecostal, and others—came together. The program written by the Palestinian committee inspired deep reflection on life in the Holy Land, particularly the experiences of women. Personal testimonies enlightened many, and the music and prayers were uplifting. However, preparations weren't without challenges. Differences in church backgrounds and opinions created tension, but through prayer, thoughtful discussion, and a



shared commitment to honoring the Palestinian committee's program, the liturgy was embraced. We extend our heartfelt thanks to the Palestinian committee for their courage in sharing their powerful, real-life stories amidst ongoing conflict. We continue to pray for peace in the region.

Website:

www.giornatamondialeidipregheira.it

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ComitatoGMPIItalia/>

LUXEMBOURG

This WDP was marked by diverse celebrations across the nation, though the atmosphere was undeniably shaped by the recent events in Palestine. While the theme aimed to inspire unity and compassion, our focus remained on the pressing struggles faced by Palestinian women and children. Balancing this awareness without politicizing the worship was a significant challenge. After much discussion, we added a note at the beginning of the service to clarify that it had been prepared before October 7, 2023, and was intended for prayer, not political commentary. This approach allowed us to honor the essence of the worship service while addressing the

sensitive context. Our gratitude goes to WDP Palestine for their resilience and for highlighting voices that might otherwise be overlooked.

Website:

<http://www.acfl.lu/de/weltgebetstag>

Facebook: [@WDPLuxembourg](https://www.facebook.com/WDPLuxembourg)

MACEDONIA

Each congregation tailored the celebration to their resources, using materials translated into Macedonian. Women from various denominations collaborated to prepare, and neighbors, friends, and relatives were warmly invited. The post-service tradition of coffee, tea, and cookies proved as popular as ever, fostering connection and camaraderie. Of course, the most challenging part was the tension in the Near East, coupled with the liturgy crafted by Palestinian women. It highlighted the urgent need for prayer focused on peace and better conditions for women worldwide. It was a day of unity, reflection, and hope.

NORWAY

The celebration felt meaningful as our country came together in services across



the nation to reflect on the struggles of Palestinian women. The theme struck a powerful chord, reminding us of the universal need for reconciliation in the face of conflict. Organizing the event was challenging given the Israeli-Palestinian conflict which stirred deep divisions, with strong opinions on both sides. As a guest on a Christian broadcast channel, one of our members shared how this day reminded us all to hope and pray for peace in the Middle East. To WDP Palestine, we offer a heartfelt thanks for opening a window into your lives and inviting us into a fellowship that transcends borders.

Website: <https://norgeskristnerad.no/kvinnernes-internasjonale-bonnedag/>

Facebook:

[@kvinnernesinternasjonalebonnedag](https://www.facebook.com/kvinnernesinternasjonalebonnedag)

POLAND

We approached this WDP with a sensitive and thoughtful response to its unique historical and social context. The liturgy, prepared by Palestinian women, presented a challenge due to Poland's complex history, including the scars of WWII, the Holocaust, decades of communism, and the current war in Ukraine. Recognizing these sensitivities,



NORWAY



POLAND

the Polish Ecumenical Council and the WDP National Committee adapted the liturgy after extensive consultations. While most of the original content was used, we also included prayers for peace in Palestine, Israel, and Ukraine. Our focus was on uniting participants in prayer for global peace, guided by the biblical call to “Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace” (Ephesians 4:3).

PORTUGAL

We had heartfelt celebrations, held in four locations on varying dates around early March. It was inspiring to witness women from different denominations set aside their differences to come

together with a shared purpose, singing and praying with enthusiasm. The celebration was also highlighted in a local magazine called “Portugal Evangélico” which was exciting. Our gratitude goes to the women of WDP Palestine, who demonstrated incredible dedication despite immense hardships. We continue to pray for peace in their homeland.

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/DMOPortugal/>

ROMANIA

This was a very special worship, and we have seen a growth in enthusiasm, numbers, unity and contributions. It

was energizing to get to know about Palestine in a deeper way than what is presented in the media and news. We felt a deep reverence for the lives of Palestinian women, and we really enjoyed singing their songs. This year was a challenge because of the tension between Palestine and Israel. It wasn't easy to find the right words and to call the situation by its name. We were outraged that people live in areas surrounded by a high concrete wall, and have to worry every day that their access to their workplace might be denied. We were also outraged that Israelis continue to build settlements in Palestinian territory and then prohibit Palestinians from digging wells. We were devastated



PORTUGAL



ROMANIA



that many boys often have no other plans for the future than to become martyrs. We were horrified about the destruction of houses, where children play in rubble with discarded weapons. We are shocked by the misery that exists in such a big contrast to the high-tech Israeli society. And, we were moved to tears that there are people on both sides who still believe in peace and togetherness.

The theme resonated with us in Romania, where we have lived in a culturally and linguistically diverse society for centuries. Our country is currently facing political elections, and it is very sad for us to see parties who do not understand this Bible verse. We see the great opportunity for the churches and WDP to act for a better understanding. We give big praise and thanks to WDP Palestine for this very moving service. The program was well structured, the songs were easy to sing, and the country background was of great importance. We wish our Palestinian sisters a peaceful life, full of respect and justice. They will stay in our prayers!

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/242861430726717> <https://www.facebook.com/vilagimanap.ro> <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1350129831759437>



SCOTLAND

Our celebration of the 2024 program was both poignant and deeply moving. Services were held in churches, care homes, and schools, with spaces beautifully decorated using Palestinian items and the vibrant colors of the Palestinian flag. The stories shared by Palestinian women brought their struggles to life, creating a deep sense of connection and empathy. The service lived up to its theme as love was strongly felt in the prayers, songs and throughout the whole service. A service was even livestreamed to extend the event's reach.

Preparations weren't without challenges, however, as some had concerns over the service. This discomfort, while difficult, highlighted the importance of amplifying marginalized voices. We are grateful to the women of Palestine for sharing their stories with such courage and love, despite their painful history. Their message of love amidst struggle was a powerful reminder of the hope and unity we strive for in prayer.

Website: www.wdpscotland.org.uk

Facebook: [World Day of Prayer Scotland](https://www.facebook.com/WorldDayofPrayerScotland)

SERBIA

WDP was celebrated in over 45 church congregations across Vojvodina and

Belgrade, uniting communities in worship. Our focus on prayer for peace felt particularly powerful, given the global and local context. The liturgy written by the women of Palestine brought us closer to the lived experiences of women there, sharing their faith amidst ongoing conflict. Their stories resonated, reminding us of the importance of love and understanding across divisions. With our history of civil war in the 1990s and NATO bombings in 1999, the message of bearing with one another in love felt urgent and essential. To WDP Palestine, we send heartfelt thanks for your efforts. Blessings to you all!

SLOVAKIA

We came together to pray for peace and tranquility in the Holy Land and Ukraine, as well as throughout the world. The event was timely, coinciding our prayers for peace with the outbreak of violence in Palestine. The theme, given our current societal polarization and the toxic effects of social media, resonated deeply with us. We utilized all the supplementary materials provided, finding them valuable in enhancing our worship experience. We extend our heartfelt thanks to the writer committee from Palestine for their dedication and skill in crafting powerful messages and beautiful songs



SLOVAKIA

during such challenging times. Their work touched our hearts profoundly and inspired us to continue striving for love and unity in our divided world.

Facebook: [@sdmslovensko](https://www.facebook.com/sdmslovensko)

SLOVENIA

We were all very appreciative of the materials from WDP Palestine, and impressed by how relevant they were to the current sad state of affairs in Palestine. This made us even more determined to make this year's prayer a special one. What fascinates people most every year are the stories of women's experiences. Our Palestinian sisters prepared very deep and powerful stories for this year's liturgy. This year was challenging because of tensions in the general community from different attitudes to the invasion of our writer country, continuing to disrupt life and exacerbate what was already a difficult situation for the Palestinian people. The theme resonated well with us. If we can bear with others, be tolerant and understanding, this is very rewarding and enriches our lives. We were especially appreciative of the fact that the Palestinian women managed to write this program under

lock-down conditions because of COVID-19. We are grateful for WDP Palestine's perseverance in loving and not hating.

Website: <https://smd-slovenija.wixsite.com/smdslovenija>

Facebook: [**SMD** \(Svetovni molitveni dan—Slovenija\)](https://www.facebook.com/SMD(Svetovni-molitveni-dan-Slovenija))

SPAIN

Overall, given that Palestine is in the news and in our daily prayers, there was a great reception of the WDP this year and much generosity with the offerings. Being able to meet with the Palestinian women by Zoom was a blessing and the virtual choirs were a nice touch. The good thing we got out of the pandemic is these technologies that bring us closer to each other across distances—locally, nationally and internationally.

We really enjoyed the “hands for peace” activity of the Bible study. The giving of the olive leaf at the beginning of the service was also very nice, as it transmitted peace and love. In Spain, we have



SLOVENIA



SPAIN

abundant olive trees, so it also helped us to feel close to the Palestinians. We loved the singing, and in Madrid we chose to listen to the Palestinians singing, helping us to feel them among us. In Barcelona, they loved ringing the bell to call people to worship and a parish choir sang several of the proposed songs.

The theme is a great challenge, because many people try to impose themselves on others and it is necessary to embrace fraternity and peace. The theme has given us an impulse for ecumenism, since it must be more difficult and at the same time more urgent to “tolerate one another in love” in Palestine. If they can do it, so can we. Moreover, it is important to establish bonds of fraternity in times of peace so that they reduce the possibility of conflicts. They are not



a luxury but a necessity. We admire the courage of the Palestinian women in the face of injustice and how they denounce it, based on the Gospels. We also found the question important: Tolerate to what extent? There are things that cannot be tolerated. Loving one's enemies does not mean letting them continue in their sins, but it entails working for their redemption.

SWEDEN

We were amazed that the Palestinian women wrote these material, as Palestine came into focus worldwide after October 7, 2023. It was a timely grace that in the midst of war, God provided this “umbrella of prayers” worldwide focusing on the situation in the Holy Land. The theme—to bear with each other in love is a challenging theme for all, but especially in their situation. In Sweden not everyone is familiar to the Palestinian women's struggle. Therefore, it was important to use their historical background. The three stories of women in the Worship Service underlined the tragic historical development and they were very touching.

Nevertheless, the Worship Service took place in at least 85 places and the offerings were larger than last year. In several

places a meal was prepared with hummus, pita bread, olives and citrus fruits. Symbols like an olive tree, anemones or other red flowers and the Palestinian flag were at display. Several Swedish-Palestinian women participated in the readings. Prayers for peace, justice and reconciliation was an important part of the service. The program including the music was highly appreciated and a way to express solidarity in prayers by many.

Website: www.svekumeniskakvinnor.se

Facebook: [@svekumeniskakvinnor](https://www.facebook.com/svekumeniskakvinnor)

SWITZERLAND

The direct contact with the WDP Palestine committee, as well as personal exchanges with Rev. Sally Azar, were inspiring. There was a great public interest in WDP this year due to the sad actuality after October 7, 2023, leading to many discussions. Attempts were made to instrumentalize WDP politically, though church and religious organizations intervened. This took place against the backdrop of Europe's inglorious history with the Jewish people. On March 1,



the Swiss radio focused the whole day on the topic of prayer, starting with an interview with our WDP President, Vroni Peterhans. We used the supplementary materials, adapting them to the needs of our Swiss communities. In addition, we offered dance instructions for a traditional Palestinian dance. We also promoted the short film, Palestine Through the Eyes of Her Daughters, from Dar al-Kalima University.

We are grateful to WDP Palestine for their willingness to respond to our questions and problems. We appreciated the statements made by WDPIC and WDP Palestine in October and February. We are grateful for the faithfulness to WDP despite some hostility.

Website: www.wgt.ch

Latin America



ARGENTINA

With great enthusiasm, we celebrated the program by reflecting on and supporting sisters facing challenging times. The theme of the worship service was particularly inspiring and served as a driving force for many. The Central Committee's worship service was streamed live on YouTube, extending its reach to a broader audience. We also utilized supplementary materials, including the children's program, photographs from the writer country, and PowerPoint presentations, to enrich the experience. Finally, we are profoundly grateful to this year's writing committee from Palestine for their courage and determination to craft this service during such turbulent times. Their dedication is truly appreciated.

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100064268606076>



BRAZIL

Celebrations happened in sanctuaries, chapels and saloons. The most energizing part of this year's program was the stories of the three Palestinian women, as well as the materials prepared by WDP Palestine that helped us understand better the awful situation of people in Palestine. We were moved by the faith of the women in dealing with the horrifying situation they are in. They made us reflect on the meaning of 'bearing with one another in love.' This is not an easy or romantic task. Society still creates ghettos and isolates some groups of people (apartheid). The theme reminds us that we should love one another instead of separating people into groups. This year's celebration was challenging because the opinions among Christians in Brazil following Oct 7, 2023 were divided. However, telling the stories from the perspective of Palestinian women had a big impact on the participants. We

discovered how little we knew about the Palestinian people and the situation they are in. We are grateful for WDP Palestine in being so courageous to inform us about what is happening, making us aware of the need for action and prayer. People in Brazil love the diversity of songs and music styles, and they like getting to know more about life in other countries. Unfortunately, despite all of our efforts, WDP is not ecumenical everywhere, because some pastors are not ecumenical. Therefore, we decided to host a few meetings this year about ecumenism.

Website:

www.dmoracao.comunidades.net

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/diamundialdeoracaobrasil>

Facebook Group:

https://www.facebook.com/groups/2040347436244407?locale=pt_BR

Instagram: [@dmo.brasil](https://www.instagram.com/dmo.brasil)



CHILE

Different denominations within the World Day of Prayer movement organized various services across cities. While the celebration was widespread, we faced challenges in keeping our people in prayer and maintaining their faith despite difficult circumstances. The message behind the theme was clear and current. We recognized that despite serving the same Lord, we struggle to maintain good relationships among brothers and sisters.

As we reflect on our experience, we would like to express our gratitude to the committee responsible for this year's program. We appreciate their fidelity to the Lord, their strength in the face of adversity, and their unconditional love for those who may not share the same beliefs or perspectives.

COSTA RICA

The services held throughout Costa Rica this year were led with a lot of commitment to a topic and a country experiencing a lot of pain. There was music and food from Palestine, and the

people were impressed as they were unaware that the Palestinians had this history with years of suffering. WDP is very important because it makes us go beyond our local churches and beyond our country. It challenges us to new ways of living our faith and becoming one with the needs of others. It was a privilege to host the guest Consul of Palestine at a preparatory meeting as well as one

of the celebrations. She provided us with up-to-date information about her home country and confirmed/upheld the stories shared by the Palestinian women. She was both impressed and grateful for our movement, and we prayed with her and for her.

We struggled in knowing how to respond and break through the positions that idealize Israel as God's chosen people. It was difficult exploring this theme in the context of genocide. We also struggled with the theme in our own context, where growing intolerance distances us from God's love and the love that we must give each other.

In the city of Limon, an ecumenical worship service was held at the San Martin de Porras Catholic Church, where it was energizing to identify with the Palestinians. It was a challenge to learn the songs and identify with the stories of the women.





GUATEMALA

At services throughout Guatemala, women were encouraged to dress in traditional Palestinian clothing, and many shared food from the country around the table. The hymns were prepared, and combined with a song known in our region, Blessed Land. We were motivated to learn about the culture, social environment and lives of all who coexist in this country, the birthplace of Jesus. It was a challenge talking about Palestine in the context of the violence that made world news. There was a lot of resistance to talk about Palestine because of Zionism. It was also difficult to digest the theme of being tolerant in a context of war, as it is in Palestine. In Guatemala, talking about tolerance is difficult because of our history of internal armed conflict and the problems of discrimination, racism, classism and impoverishment. It had to be made very clear that being tolerant is not synonymous with injustice.

We used the Bible study, the Country Background and Photographs in addition to the Worship Service. We also used the Global Virtual Choir videos prepared by WDPIC, which was very special because we could see the faces of others celebrating around the world. We distributed postcards with contextual information. We are grateful for the courage of WDP Palestine in preparing this liturgy in the difficult context of war and genocide. It was good to understand the unofficial symbols of Palestine, such as watermelons and keys. We thank God because this

celebration helped turn our eyes to what is happening in Palestine.

Facebook: [Dia Mundial de Oración—Guatemala](#)

HONDURAS

Gathering annually at different congregations, this year's event brought together members of various denominations for a full day of devotion, prayer, testimonies, and Bible study led by inspiring guest speakers. From morning

“We are grateful for the courage of WDP Palestine in preparing this liturgy in the difficult context of war and genocide.”



devotions to an evening celebration service, the day was filled with heartfelt worship, educational programs, and community prayer, leaving everyone spiritually uplifted.

The excitement of planning—coordinating menus, hymns, and speakers—was matched by the impact of learning about the struggles of Palestinian sisters, which brought the theme's relevance into sharp focus. The heartbreak over ongoing conflicts in Palestine and the residual tensions from 2023 weighed heavily on everyone's hearts. Despite these challenges, prayers for peace and unity prevailed.

We offer a heartfelt thanks to WDP Palestine for their bravery in sharing their stories. We understand it wasn't easy, the risks that you undertook as writer committee, telling your stories and being open with the world. We want you to know that you have been heard,

and we are continuing to pray for you, continuing to trust in our God and he will give you peace.

MEXICO

The 2024 program was celebrated through services held by various Christian Evangelical denominations

across approximately 20 cities. Women's Societies from different churches united to organize it, increasing participation significantly. The theme encouraged reflection on the diverse challenges in our country and internationally and the importance of being loving and tolerant. Services featured creative elements like regional fruits, cultural attire inspired by Palestine, and PowerPoint presentations showcasing the writer country. The community expressed gratitude to the Palestine committee for sharing their culture and reaffirmed their unity in prayer for their country. Attendees also enjoyed symbolic tokens like handmade bookmarks.





PANAMA

WDP 2024 was celebrated with great expectation and enthusiasm this year in Panama. We were touched by the stories of the three Palestinian women, who shared their experiences, sufferings and losses. In spite of how hard and difficult their lives are, they give us an example of courage and strength, and how they have endured all these situations in love. It was a challenging call this year to cultivate humility, meekness and patience with our family members, co-workers, and even fellow church members. We are challenged to stay united in the Spirit and bonded through peace, respecting each other despite differences. Conflicts in our lives are inevitable and are neither easy nor pleasant. Ephesians gives us the basis for how to resolve these conflicts. We are grateful to the WDP Palestine Committee for inspiring all the women of the world to bear with each other in love during difficult times.



VENEZUELA

WDP 2024 was celebrated enthusiastically across multiple cities, uniting various Christian denominations. We integrated elements into our worship service like Palestinian flags, traditional attire, olive branches, and cultural foods to honor the country in focus. Worship services included hymns, scripture readings adapted for inclusivity, and reflections led by diverse leaders. Despite challenges in scheduling, services successfully emphasized solidarity, unity, and prayer for peace. The theme, "I urge you . . . bear with one another in love," resonated deeply, fostering empathy for Palestinian struggles.

PARAGUAY

WDP was celebrated in Paraguay this year with great joy and much respect for our sisters in Palestine. Their work to prepare us was key to understanding many misconceptions that we have had for years because of the supremacy of Israel in the origins of Christianity. We realize this leaves out Palestine. We appreciated getting to know the history of the struggle, which was a source of both sadness and hope. We thought the women were courageous in telling their stories from the perspective of a God of love. The theme moved us to put our love into practice in our daily lives, identifying moments when we are intolerant. We are thankful to WDP Palestine for their sharing of their lives and daily struggles, and also inspired by how they seek peace in the midst of so many territorial and religious conflicts. May the hope for peace never be extinguished, and even more so in these present times.

Pacific



AOTEAROA/NEW ZEALAND

Being among the first to commence the World Day of Prayer was exciting, as it fostered a sense of solidarity with Palestinian women amidst the ongoing conflict in their region. The theme was deeply relevant, inspiring hope and gratitude for our freedom to practice faith openly. However, some found it challenging to set aside personal views on Middle Eastern politics to focus on the voices and prayers of Palestinian women, feeling both sadness and hope for their safety. We deeply appreciate the women of WDP Palestine for helping us better understand Palestine's struggles and for fostering empathy and prayerful support.

Website: <http://www.worlddayofprayer.co.nz/>

AUSTRALIA

This year was a more solemn occasion as we prayed for the people in Palestine beset by war. It was good to be able to



bring their concerns and difficulties to God, as we feel so helpless in the face of the ongoing conflict and the suffering that comes with war. Many people commented on the timing of this service, since the country, theme and scripture were chosen in 2017. It was exciting to recognize that God knew the need. It was energizing to hear the stories of the Palestinian's loving faith and commitment. There were many comments on the beauty of the service, and people were moved by the readings. It was such a privilege to learn more about Palestine.

The biggest challenge this year was the Israel/Gaza conflict. Some Christians in Australia wanted to connect with Israel, and others could see the distress of the Palestinians. It created a lot of discussion and sadly some division. In one state of Australia, half of the districts cancelled their services out of fear that they would be seen as supporting Hamas. Some services removed the word "Palestine"

from their advertising, and some omitted the stories of the three Palestinian women. However, the majority of services used the materials without making any changes. The people of Palestine deserve peace, and that was the emphasis in their liturgy. Peace for all.

We were very moved by the prayers from Bethlehem Bible College, as brought to the Global Conversation by Shireen Awad Hilal. It was emotional to pray for the people involved, as we understood how helpless they felt with the intensity of the war. What a waste of lives. The chosen country was divisive, but the chosen theme was embraced and very meaningful. We are very grateful to the Writer Committee for their diligence in composing this material under difficult circumstances.

Website: <https://www.worlddayofprayer-australia.org/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/WDPAustralia/>



COOK ISLANDS

We remember the women of Palestine who wrote this year's liturgy, who live in a conflict zone in Gaza and the West Bank. Even though Israel ended their occupation of Gaza in 2005, they are still oppressing the Palestinian people to this day. We pray for relief of the suffering of all people, children, women and men who are caught up in something bigger than themselves. The Cook Islands is a peaceful country. We do not have wars or tribal conflicts, but we do still have friendships, relationships and family that are tested from time to time. The theme encourages us to rise above that and to bear with each other in love, to give and share love. Some things cannot be changed by us as humans, but all is possible with God. We are thankful that WDP Palestine shared their stories with us. It gave us an insight into the place where our Lord Jesus was born. We hope that one day, when there is no war, we will be able to visit their historic country.

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/cook.islands.world.day.of.prayer>

FIJI

Preparations for the 2024 WDP began with weekly prayer vigils across various church denominations, building



momentum for the main ecumenical service held at Suva's Sacred Heart Cathedral. The service brought together diverse faith-based organizations, NGOs, and government representatives, reflecting a shared commitment to peace and solidarity.

The day's most energizing aspect was learning from one another's histories and cultures, emphasizing the importance of setting aside differences for peace. However, navigating mixed reactions to the political backdrop of Palestine and Israel posed a challenge. Despite this, the theme's call for unity and love inspired us to confront these issues. Broadcasts on national radio and social media further amplified the message, engaging Fijians across the country.

Thank you WDP Palestine, for the heartfelt program. We felt the anointing of God and empathized with the difficult situations faced in Palestine and around the world. A huge Vinaka vakalevu!

KIRIBATI

Although WDP is an international ecumenical movement, until this year, the Kiribati Uniting Church was the only denomination to observe it here. The service this year was both exciting and energizing, as it highlighted the often

unseen lives, backgrounds and challenges faced by Palestinians. We were inspired by the women who prepared this service. Despite the difficulties they've gone through, they managed to complete the materials, helping us to understand the true meaning of love, compassion and unity.

Although WDP promotes love, compassion and unity, there was, is and will always be a conflict not only in Palestine, but worldwide. We experience conflict in our everyday lives. This year's theme has to be put in our minds, hearts and souls to make the world a better place for everyone. The theme resonates deeply with us, nurturing a renewed sense of compassion and solidarity during challenging times. Our heartfelt thanks to our sisters from Palestine for their extraordinary preparation and organization of this year's WDP. Their efforts have made a significant impact on our community and the church as a whole, inspiring us to bear with one another in love.

SAMOA

We had a combined service with the 3 major churches here – Catholic, Methodist and the Congregational Christian Church. We also invited government leaders, and were thankful



that the Prime Minister and Cabinet Ministers were able to attend. On first learning that the WDP was coming from Palestine, we were quite excited that it was prepared by the nation where Christianity has its roots. We always hear about ongoing conflicts in that area in the news, so we were looking forward to being encouraged in faith by our sisters in the Holy Land. We had to face the harsh reality that we take too much for granted here in Samoa, while our Palestinian sisters in Christ face social and physical climates that sound harsh and challenging. The three testimonies by Eleanor, Lina and Sarah reveal that they have been bearing with what's been going on for generations. Generations of living in exile, generations of displacement, generations of separation, and generations of living in hope. They hold onto the keys of their homes, proof that they remain hopeful they will one day return to the place they called home.

We felt that the theme resonated loudly in our country and with our own people. We are to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which we have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love. When we come across the flaws and weaknesses of each other, we are called to tolerate, support, endure and



bear with one another in love by extending forgiveness and treating others with humility, gentleness and patience.

We want to thank WDP Palestine for opening our eyes to the aftermath of the 1948 wars which led to thousands of Palestinians being displaced and exiled as refugees. We had heard of the Nakba, or Catastrophe, before, but reading these firsthand accounts reminded us that in any historical conflict, many lives either end tragically or endure with suffering. We are grateful the Palestinian Christian women have never given up hope. They have reminded us to accept differences

and what makes each unique. Only then can we foster unity and love, cooperation, resilience and respect between the different ethnicities of the world.

TUVALU

The theme of the year was a reminder that despite our differences, it is important that we respond with love. In times of war and turmoil, it is imperative that we lend those in need a helping hand, a hand that doesn't judge, but one that offers love and support. As women, we must learn to depend on one another. Love should bind us together.



Bearing Together in Love

BY KATIE REIMER

What a gift to walk alongside one another through this remarkable year. From virtual choirs uniting voices across continents, to young women gathering for pilgrimage, to regional conferences deepening relationships and understanding—we have witnessed countless ways that Christian women choose to journey with one another in love. Like the ancient olive trees of Palestine that survive and bear fruit through difficult conditions, our movement continues to demonstrate that bearing with one another is not passive acceptance but active commitment to unity and peace. The stories below offer glimpses of how God is working through our worldwide sisterhood. May they inspire us to continue walking side by side, our hearts growing wider with each step as we join together in the heartbeat of God's love.

PALESTINE 2024

Like the ancient olive trees that have witnessed centuries pass in the Holy Land, our Palestinian sisters offered wisdom born of deep roots and patient endurance. Through their worship service, centered on Ephesians 4:1–7, they shared three powerful stories of women choosing to “bear with one another in love”—stories of resilience passed down through generations, of truth-telling in the face of injustice, and of flourishing despite harsh circumstances. Like the olive tree's ability to survive and bear

*“Along the journey,
among the people,
we sing and praise
your way of love.
Our hearts grow wider
from all your kindness,
joining with the heartbeat
of your love.”*

*Naseeru binur elkalima
(Your Word Lights the Path)
by Luai Zaher & Rabab Zaitoun*

fruit through difficult conditions, these stories showed us that bearing with one another in love is not passive acceptance but an active, costly commitment to unity and peace.

The service wove together potent symbols of Palestinian life—olive branches

representing endurance, citrus fruits reminding us of abundance, and cactus plants demonstrating survival and resilience. Through prayers in Arabic and Aramaic, through stories both painful and hope-filled, our Palestinian sisters helped us understand that bearing with one another requires “humility and gentleness, patience and love.” We are deeply grateful for their courage in creating this service that calls us to maintain “unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” even—and especially—in times of profound challenge.

COOK ISLANDS 2025

WDP Cook Islands have offered a deeply moving program for 2025, centered on the theme “I Made You Wonderful” from Psalm 139:14. Through three powerful testimonies—a young person's journey through the COVID-19 pandemic, an elder's advocacy for preserving the





indigenous Māori language, and the story of the first female Cook Islands doctor at the Pediatric Department of the Cook Islands—the service reveals how recognizing our divine worth transforms our relationships with ourselves and each other. The worship materials beautifully integrate the spiritual and cultural treasures of the Cook Islands, weaving together the profound “Kia orana” greeting (which carries wishes for flourishing life), the beloved Tiare Maori national flower, and sacred imeni tuki hymns. Participants are invited into a rich sensory experience of prayer and worship through ocean sounds, movement, shared blessings, and meaningful symbols of island life.

The program thoughtfully addresses contemporary challenges in the Cook Islands, from language preservation and healthcare accessibility to climate change impacts and youth empowerment, while remaining anchored in the central message that each person is “fearfully and wonderfully made” by God. The service culminates in a stirring call to prayerful action,

encouraging worshipers to embrace their identity as God’s masterpiece and extend that same recognition to others. Through this lens of divine worth and purpose, WDP Cook Islands has crafted a program that both honors their distinctive cultural voice and speaks to our universal yearning to know ourselves as uniquely known, loved, and created by God. This culturally grounded approach brings the theme to vibrant life while connecting faith communities worldwide with the profound wisdom and spiritual insights of Cook Islander Christians.

NIGERIA 2026

The WDP Nigeria committee worked diligently through the first half of 2024 to develop their program centered on the theme “*I Will Give You Rest: Come*” from Matthew 11:28–30. Through powerful personal narratives and thoughtfully crafted worship elements, our Nigerian sisters address pressing challenges faced by their communities, including systemic oppression of widows, religious persecution, and the interconnected burdens of poverty and mental health.

The materials incorporate rich cultural elements such as vibrant African fabrics, traditional songs, and the joyful practice of dancing offerings, while weaving together universal themes of finding rest and renewal in God.

The completed worship materials were distributed to our global World Day of Prayer movement in fall 2024, giving committees ample time to translate and prepare for the March 2026 celebration. The service includes compelling stories like that of Beatrice, a young widow who found strength in faith and community; Jato, a mother whose daily act of sending her daughter to school becomes a testimony of courage amid religious tensions; and Blessing, whose account of persisting through economic hardship reflects the resilience of many Nigerians. Through these narratives and accompanying prayers, the Nigerian committee invites participants to both acknowledge life’s heavy burdens and embrace Christ’s promise of rest, while calling the worldwide movement to prayerful action in response to these challenges.

WDP CENTENNIAL 2027

Planning continues to build momentum for the WDP Centennial in 2027, marking 100 years of uninterrupted global ecumenical prayer led by Christian women. The WDPIC Executive Committee has been deepening their engagement with the theme “*United in Prayer for Justice and Peace*” through the development of an Intention Statement and selection of scripture passages that will guide the celebration. Conversations about the theme have been taking place with women’s groups around the world, gathering insights and perspectives that will help shape this landmark observance. Additionally, work is underway to digitize the movement’s rich archives, which contain 100 years of prayers, worship materials, music, artwork, and testimonies. This archival project will provide valuable resources as we develop materials that tell the story of our remarkable prayer movement.

In other exciting Centennial news, following a thorough application process from countries interested in hosting the 2027 WDPIC International Meeting, Ghana has been selected as the host country for this historic gathering. The

selection carries special resonance as our current WDPIC Chairperson, Joyce Larko Steiner, PhD, made history in 2022 as the first African Chairperson in our movement’s century-long journey. Dr. Steiner has provided powerful leadership, particularly with a focus on engaging and supporting young women in the movement. WDPIC is now working closely with WDP Ghana to finalize the location and dates for this significant meeting, which will bring women from around the world to the African continent for our centennial celebration. More details about the International Meeting and other Centennial celebrations will be shared as plans continue to develop.

COSTA RICA 2028

WDP Costa Rica hosted a Strengthening National Committee (SNC) workshop from November 14–16, 2024, at the Casa Conde Apartamentos in San Jose. This workshop was organized under the leadership of Rebeca Cascante, previously one of the WDPIC Latin America Regional Representatives. The workshop focused on exploring the theme “*Leading the Way in Grace*,”

drawing inspiration from multiple scripture passages including Joel 2:28, Isaiah 11:1–6, Jeremiah 1:4–8, and Luke 10:21–24. With a special emphasis on valuing young women’s leadership and wellbeing, along with intergenerational sharing, the workshop aimed to strengthen the WDP Costa Rica Committee and establish expectations for the writing process. Participants worked on creating an Intention Statement and began planning for the Writer Workshop scheduled for Spring 2025. Through collaborative study of WDP Guiding Principles and deep engagement with the theme, the workshop laid a foundation for the development of the 2028 worship materials.

VIRTUAL GLOBAL CHOIR

WDPIC launched its first Virtual Global Choir initiative in 2024 as part of the preparations for the WDP Palestine celebration. Drawing together voices from across the movement’s global community, the project produced virtual choral renditions of four songs from the WDP Palestine worship service, including the traditional *Yarabba ssalami* (God of





واطلب اليكم (Wa atlubu) - I Urge You, by Najwa Hashweh Azazian (Palestine)



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VIRTUAL GLOBAL CHOIR

Peace), *Wa atlubu* (I Urge You), *Naseeru binur elkalima* (Your Word Lights the Path), and the *Aramaic Lord's Prayer*. The recordings featured soloists and cho-risters from over 15 countries singing in Arabic, English, Spanish and French, bringing together women, men, and children's voices in a powerful demon-stration of WDP's worldwide reach.

The initiative was made possible through the generous sponsorship of WDP Committees and individual donors across several regions, including WDP Europe, WDP Malaysia, WDP United States, and Jeanie & Dennis Reimer. Produced under the technical direction of SueAnn Shiah and Pablo García, these virtual choral pieces, featuring artwork by Palestinian-German artist Halima Aziz, have been shared widely through

WDP's digital platforms, creating new opportunities for committees to incorporate multilingual music into their local celebrations.

YOUNG WOMEN'S PILGRIMAGE

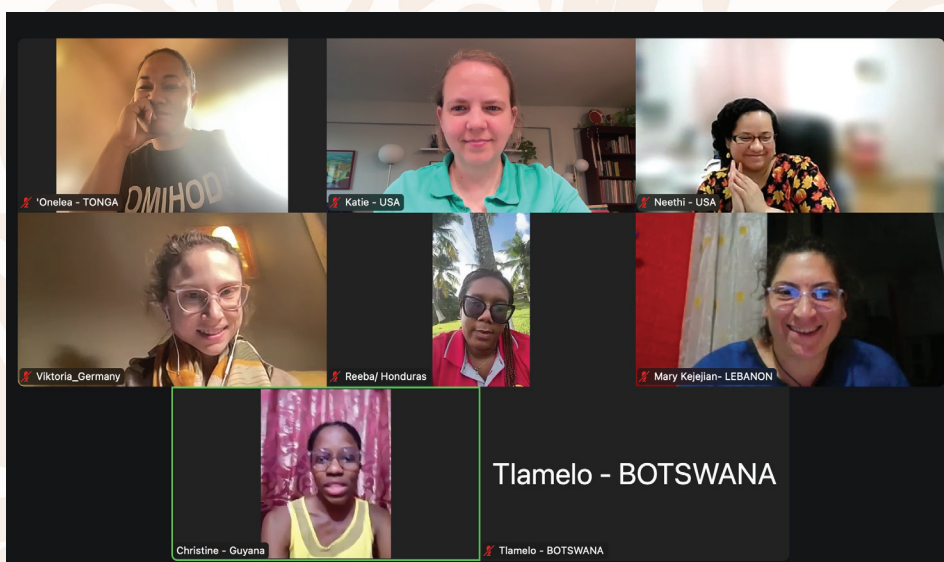
Although the Young Women's Pilgrimage to the Holy Land had to be postponed, the selected young women have maintained strong connections through an active WhatsApp group, keeping their sense of community alive. The group demonstrated their continued commitment by collaborating to create a video recording of the WDP Palestine worship service, which was shared on YouTube. While awaiting the opportunity to reschedule the Holy Land pilgrimage, they remain united in prayer with their

sisters from WDP Palestine for a just peace in the region.

In the meantime, WDPIC has organized another Young Women's Pilgrimage to the Cook Islands, scheduled for January 19–26, 2025. Priority was given to members of the original Holy Land pilgrimage group, and the final cohort includes young women (ages 21–35) from Botswana, Germany, Ghana, Guyana, Honduras, Lebanon, Philippines, Tonga, and the USA. The group began their spiritual preparation through a series of Zoom meetings in fall 2024. Following the pilgrimage, WDP committees are encouraged to reach out to these young women to hear about their experiences and insights, ensuring that the impact of the pilgrimage extends throughout the broader WDP movement.



**WDP AFRICA
REGIONAL
CONFERENCE**



**YOUNG WOMEN'S
PILGRIMAGE**

a stronger network of support and collaboration across the continent. The gathering concluded with a cultural night and gift exchange celebrating the rich diversity of the African region.

WDP AFRICA REGIONAL CONFERENCE

The second triennial WDP Africa Regional Conference took place in Lusaka, Zambia from Sept 22–27, 2024, organized by WDP Africa Regional Representatives Queen Bridget Chisha (Zambia) and Rosalie Akoue ep Adze (Gabon) in collaboration with WDP Zambia. Under the theme *Understanding the Life in God's Service*, based on Romans 12:1–2, the conference featured sessions on governance, women's roles in church and society, and climate justice. WDPIC Chairperson Joyce Larko Steiner and

Executive Director Katie Reimer led sessions on WDP's history, Guiding Principles and new WDPIC initiatives. The conference included breakout sessions conducted in three language groups (Anglophone, Francophone, and Lusophone), cultural exchanges with traditional instruments from each country, and a special Thursdays in Black observance focusing on gender-based violence. Through shared meals, morning devotions, and evening fellowship, relationships among WDP leaders throughout Africa were strengthened and deepened, fostering

ECUMENICAL RELATIONSHIPS

WDPIC continues to strengthen its ties with fellow global women's ecumenical movements, particularly through its connections with the **Asian Church Women's Conference (ACWC)** and the **International Committee Fellowship of the Least Coin (ICFLC)**. WDPIC participated in the 17th Quadrennial General Assembly of ACWC from November 5–8, 2023, held at the Presbyterian Bible College in Hsinchu, Taiwan. The assembly, themed *Women Caring for God's*



ACWC MEETING IN TAIWAN

Earth and grounded in Romans 8:20–23, brought together women leaders from across Asia who shared reports of their WDP activities among other initiatives. Following the assembly, WDPIC participated in the annual ICFLC board meeting as one of eleven ecumenical partners. This partnership is particularly meaningful as both WDPIC and ICFLC are global ecumenical prayer movements led by women.

A new relationship is growing between WDPIC and the **World Student Christian Federation (WSCF)–US**. WDP USA Chair Neethi Prasad and WDPIC Executive Director Katie Reimer were invited to lead a service using the WDP Palestine materials at WSCF's Student Leadership Team meeting in New York City on April 12, 2024. This connection continued to grow through Neethi and Katie's invitation to participate and lead a session on WDP in WSCF–US's October 2024 conference, *Embodied Faith: Christian Students Organizing for a New World*, in Washington, D.C. The conference, based on 1 Corinthians 12:12–27, focused on equipping students and young adults with tools for social change while remaining grounded in prophetic



WSCF-US STUDENT LEADERSHIP TEAM



WORSHIP LEADING AT CCUN

Biblical traditions. Through workshops, creative expression, and community building, participants explored their roles in social movements as individuals and as a collective body following Jesus' revolutionary way.

During the 68th session of the **United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)** (March 11–22, 2024), WDPIC was invited to provide leadership for several worship services at the Church Center for the United Nations. The WDPIC Executive Advisory Group (EAG), including Chairperson Joyce Larko

Steiner, Treasurer Deanne Newland, Europe Regional Representative Edith Toth, and Executive Director Katie Reimer, collaborated on these worship services with Rev. Nicqi Ashwood, Programme Executive for Just Community of Women and Men at the World Council of Churches, and Dionne Boissiere, the first woman of African descent to serve as chaplain at the Church Center for the United Nations. These services provided meaningful opportunities for spiritual reflection during this significant gathering focused on women's rights and empowerment.

Our Collective Journey

BY KATIE REIMER

GLOBAL CONVERSATION

On December 2, 2023, the World Day of Prayer International Committee (WDPIC) Executive Committee hosted a Global Conversation with WDP Palestine, bringing together regional representatives from around the world. A profound moment emerged when Shireen Awwad Hilal, Director of Bethlehem Bible College Community & Development Outreach, shared a powerful prayer for Gaza written by students and faculty. The virtual gathering highlighted the challenges and hopes of WDP Palestine as they prepared the 2024 worship materials, embodying our commitment to global sisterhood and mutual understanding during challenging times. Rev. Sally Azar, the first female Palestinian

pastor in the Holy Land, also shared reflections on their journey of preparing the worship materials, underscoring the resilience and spiritual depth of the Palestinian committee.

EXECUTIVE ADVISORY GROUP IN NYC

The WDPIC Executive Advisory Group (EAG) convened for an intensive in-person meeting from March 8–12, 2024, in New York City, marking a significant moment of reflection and strategic planning. This gathering brought together key leaders to engage in deep visioning for the World Day of Prayer movement, carefully examining our collective journey and charting a path forward. The group conducted a

comprehensive review of our current landscape, identifying critical areas for growth, strengthening, and future focus. Through intentional dialogue and collaborative discernment, the EAG began mapping out strategic priorities that will guide the movement in the years to come.

ANNUAL CONTRIBUTIONS

During the 2022 International Meeting, voting delegates from every committee affirmed a recommendation from the Administrative Working Group, collectively agreeing on a commitment for all World Day of Prayer National Committees to contribute at least 5% of their annual offering to the WDPIC by January 31 of the following year. In



Let's Talk with WDP Palestine

~A World Day of Prayer Global Conversation~

Hosted by the World Day of Prayer International Committee (WDPIC)

Saturday, December 2, 2023
16:00 UTC / 18:00 Jerusalem



Global Conversation: Let's Talk with WDP Palestine



World Day of Prayer I...
717 subscribers

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8,247 views Jan 10, 2024

On December 2 2023, WDPIC, in collaboration with the World Day of Prayer Palestine Committee, hosted a Global Conversation based on the WDP 2024 program and theme, "I Beg You... Bear With One Another in Love" (Ephesians 4:1-3). It was a great opportunity for the writing committee to introduce themselves and their experience developing the program for 2024, as well as the current situation.



HURRICANE PRAYERS

”

“Strong and powerful God...
...we cry out to you in the aftermath
of Hurricanes Helene and Milton...”

By Steph McClellan (WDP Canada)
WDPIC CANA Regional Representative

Oct 11, 2024

worlddayofprayer.net



Una oración de agradecimiento por la vida de Gustavo Gutiérrez



“Gracias Dios de Amor por la vida de Gustavo Gutiérrez. Nos deja un gran legado teológico para cultivar en cada cristiana, cristiano una actitud de servicio que conduzca a una vida digna para todos y todas, principalmente para las personas pobres y excluidas de cada continente...”

By Maria Laura Tolu (WDP Argentina)
WDPIC Latin America Regional Representative
Nov 4, 2024
worlddayofprayer.net



the past year, WDPIC Treasurer Deanne Newland, working closely with Regional Representatives, has been instrumental in implementing this resolution. The policy, detailed in the *World Day of Prayer Resource Book*, embodies a profound principle: every contribution, regardless of its size, is a powerful symbol of unity and solidarity with the international movement.

WDP NIGERIA 2026 MATERIALS

The WDPIC Executive Committee (EC) continued its work of supporting Writer Committees through a collaborative editing process. This year, the EC worked with WDP Nigeria as they developed the materials for the 2026 World Day of Prayer program. With careful attention and pastoral sensitivity, the EC reviewed the submitted materials, providing constructive feedback, theological insights, and words of encouragement.

This process reflects our commitment to ensuring that each year's worship materials are thoughtful, culturally rich, and spiritually profound, while supporting the Writer Committee in their journey.

GLOBAL PRAYERS

Throughout the year, the Executive Committee responded to global challenges and moments of significance through heartfelt prayers of solidarity, lament, and thanksgiving. We lifted up prayers for those affected by devastating earthquakes in Turkey, Vanuatu, and Taiwan; for communities in Nigeria experiencing political unrest; for regions

impacted by hurricanes in the United States and Caribbean; in solidarity with Lebanon during times of conflict; and in grateful remembrance of theologian Gustavo Gutierrez. These prayers embodied our commitment to bearing one another's burdens, standing in spiritual communion with our sisters and brothers around the world during moments of profound challenge and hope.

A Prayer for Vanuatu

**"God of mercy and grace,
We cry out to you for protection
as wind and rain destroy
our homes and gardens, and flood our land.
Hear our cries of despair and see our tears."**

By Vicki Marrey
Regional Representative, WDP Pacific
March 28, 2023
worlddayofprayer.net



Sumud: Bearing One Another's Truths

BY KATIE REIMER

“Listening and speaking. Prayer is rooted in listening to God and to one another. In the World Day of Prayer, we listen to the Word of God and to voices of women sharing their hopes and fears, their joys and sorrows, their opportunities and needs.” —WDP GUIDING PRINCIPLE #2

Our second Guiding Principle teaches us that prayer is about listening and speaking—to God and to one another. We are called to hear the voices of women across the world, to listen deeply to their hopes and fears, their joys and sorrows, their opportunities and needs. As Nelle Morton beautifully articulated, we are challenged to “hear one another into speaking”—creating a space where women find the courage to share their deepest truths.

This year has certainly not been easy. We have faced trials that tested the very fabric of our sisterhood—global tensions, personal struggles, and moments that threatened to pull us apart. Yet, by God’s grace, we found a way through. We stayed in the struggle, kept talking to each other, kept walking together.

One of the most powerful ideas I have learned from Palestinians is the concept of *sumud*—steadfast perseverance. *Sumud* is more than just endurance; it is a way of being that refuses to accept injustice while remaining rooted in love.

It is a profound spiritual practice that keeps our hearts open even in the face of difficulty.

I see *sumud* manifested in our collective journey. I see it in the way WDP leaders maintain connections across borders and time zones, patiently building relationships that strengthen our worldwide sisterhood. Our young women demonstrated this spirit beautifully. Even when their planned pilgrimage was postponed, they maintained their bonds and found creative ways to share the Palestine worship materials. Our Virtual Global Choir became a testament to our resilience—people from different continents patiently learning new songs and languages to create something beautiful together. Throughout our movement, we continue bringing women together across denominations in unified prayer.

The spirit of *sumud* reminds us that bearing with one another in love is both a gift and a commitment—one that transforms us as we practice it. When we choose to stay steadfast in



Katie Reimer, Executive Director,
World Day of Prayer International

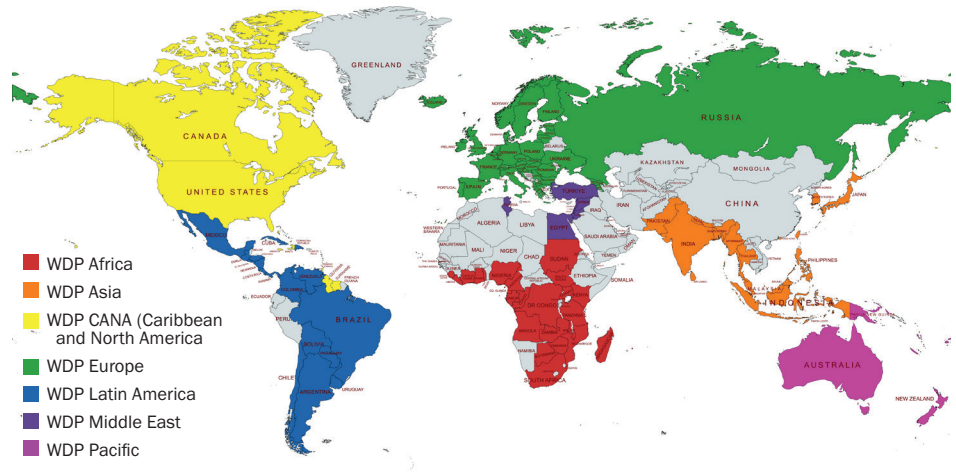
our relationships, when we persevere in listening to each other’s stories, when we maintain hope for justice while refusing to give in to despair, we participate in God’s vision for our world.

I am deeply grateful to our Palestinian sisters for sharing this wisdom with us, and to all the women in our movement who demonstrate steadfast perseverance day after day. May we continue to bear with one another in love, trusting that our patient, persistent way of being will transform the very landscape of our world—breaking down walls of division, healing ancient wounds, and illuminating pathways to a just peace that embraces all.

WDP at a Glance

The World Day of Prayer is a global ecumenical movement led by Christian women who welcome all to join in prayer and action for peace and justice. The common day of observance is the first Friday of March, but WDP activities are held all year long.

Every year this journal aims to summarize the activities of this worldwide, ecumenical movement. It helps us all to see and understand how our prayer movement is being celebrated internationally. The 2024 Journal is based on 83 annual reports received out of the 146 countries that received the WDP worship service materials.



How will WDP offering make a difference in Palestine and around the world?

The World Day of Prayer Guiding Principles acknowledge that all people have something to give and to receive. Local groups receive the materials from the Writer Committee and respond with giving. Each National Committee decides how to use offerings collected each year. Through this WDP offering, financial resources are shared with women and children around the world. The exchange of stories and gifts is one way that our motto of “Informed prayer, Prayerful action” is lived out.

WDP Palestine has indicated a few projects and organizations to support as a sign of our global solidarity. The projects and organizations aim



WDP Palestine Recommended Organizations for 2024 Offering

1. **Women's Centre for Legal Aid and Counseling** - wclac.org/Page/8
2. **Women's Affairs Technical Committee** - watcpal.org/new/
3. **Caritas** - cbh.ps/en/page/the-hospital
4. **Lifegate** - lifegate-reha.org/en/lifegate-beit-jala/who-we-help/
5. **St. Martha's House** - friendsoftheholyland.org.uk/st-marthas-house

to protect and promote women's human rights, to build towards a society of equality between women and men, to support children's hospitals and centers for those living with disabilities and the elderly.

WDP 1927-2031 THEME TIMELINE

Our latest WDP poster showcases 104 years of World Day of Prayer worship services. The timeline poster lists the writers who have lent their voices to the movement, and the themes that motivated their prayers since 1927. Our movement of “Informed Prayer, Prayerful Action” has grown and expanded over the years and, in 2027, our movement will have reached the incredible milestone of 100 years of uninterrupted prayer!

This poster includes the themes and countries selected at our 2022 WDPIC International Meeting:



WDPIC - 2027 - “United in Prayer for Justice and Peace!”

WDP Costa Rica - 2028 - “Leading the Way in Grace”

WDP Italy - 2029 - “Compassion Brings Healing”

WDP Nepal - 2030 - “As the Earth Rests, People Can Eat”

WDP Jamaica - 2031 - “A Sign of Faith”

And finally, the artwork selected for this poster was created by the former Chairperson for WDP Cuba, Ruth Mariet Trueba Castro, who unexpectedly and sadly passed away in 2021. Ruth worked closely with WDPIC ever since creating the artwork for the WDP Cuba program in 2016. We are grateful for the talent, kindness and passion she shared with us over the years. May she rest in eternal peace.

There are two ways that you can order the poster. You can order a printed copy from the WDPIC office (email—admin@worlddayofprayer.net) or you can order the art design and print the poster in your country.

The updated prices are:

1 to 10 printed posters = \$ 5.00 each poster plus shipping;
11 to 99 printed posters = \$ 4.00 each poster plus shipping;
Over 100 printed posters = \$ 3.00 each poster plus shipping;
Digital Art Design = Free of charge

EDITORIAL TEAM

The WDP Journal is an annual publication of the World Day of Prayer International Committee (WDPIC). It is based on the Annual Reports written by the WDP National/Regional Committees. It offers an overview of the global movement from its local context and includes expressions of prayer and action based on the annual theme. WDPIC promotes the sharing of information. Therefore, the Journal can be freely downloaded from the WDPIC website, and it can be reproduced provided acknowledgment is given to the source of information. All photos were originally sent from WDP Committees with the understanding that they might be published.

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To download the Journal, visit our website:
www.worlddayofprayer.net

WDP COOK ISLANDS

“I Made You Wonderful”
March 7, 2025



Our sisters from WDP Cook Islands have spent the last few years deepening into the theme, “I Made You Wonderful,” based on Psalm 139:1–18. Their program invites us into the knowledge that each one of us was made with care and love by God. When we have the capacity to receive this profound truth, everything in our life changes and we begin to radiate and shine from within.

Our first Guiding Principle in the World Day of Prayer articulates that our starting point is Christian women. This has been an essential conviction of our movement over the last century. Too often, women and girls have been silenced and oppressed, making this upcoming theme from WDP Cook Islands particularly relevant. The message that we as women and girls are “fearfully and wonderfully” made in the image of God reinforces our movement’s support of women “express[ing] their faith and speak[ing] about their lives in prayer and worship before God and in community.”

The Worship Service invites us to notice aspects of our divinely created bodies that

we often take for granted. Following this grounding opening liturgy, we are then invited to hear the scripture from Psalms 139:1–18, woven together with stories of three women from the Cook Islands. We come to understand that God knows us, is always with us, and made us unique and special.

Our sisters from Cook Islands have invited us to offer prayers of adoration and thanksgiving to our Creator, followed by prayers of confession and longing. The prayers of intercession guide us to ask God for wisdom, courage and healing, so that all people would be treated as fearfully and wonderfully made.

What happens when we realize that God is with us and for us? How would we live differently if we really believed that we are God’s masterpiece? What we think impacts how we act and changing the way we think changes how we act.

Praise God for the dedication and love of our sisters in Cook Islands as they prepared these materials. May they bless us all.

WDP NIGERIA

“I Will Give You Rest: Come”
March 6, 2026

The WDP program from Nigeria bring us a powerful invitation drawn from Matthew 11:28–30. At a time when people worldwide are carrying heavy burdens, our Nigerian sisters offer profound insights into finding rest in God.

Through their exploration of different kinds of burdens—shame, systemic oppression, religious persecution, poverty and despair—the writers help us understand both the weight of human suffering and the depths of divine rest. Their work shows us that true rest isn’t just about physical relief, but about transformation through God’s grace and community support.

You’ll find this theme beautifully expressed across all program components. The Worship Service features a playlet about Nigerian women and their experiences reveal how God provides rest through community support, faith, and hope. The Bible

Study explores divine rest from creation to Jesus’ time, examining wisdom traditions and Jesus’ transformation of rest from rigid rules to liberating mercy.

Original music was composed for the program includes a moving theme song by Chisom R. Chukwumerije, written especially for this World Day of Prayer service. The song invites those who are weary and oppressed to find comfort and rest in God.

The artistic work of Gift Amarachi Ottah beautifully captures the theme through her depiction of burdens carried by women from diverse backgrounds.

The Nigerian committee has woven together their cultural wisdom with the universal need for rest. Through symbols like the calabash bowl, which represents



both daily sustenance and divine provision, they remind us how God meets us in our weariness.

As we prepare for WDP 2026, may we learn to embody Jesus’ invitation: ‘Come to me, all you who are weary.’ Together, let us become channels of God’s rest in our troubled world.