

PIN Bulletin For Local Organizers

Volume 41, December 2022

*Will you strive for justice and peace among all people,
and respect the dignity of every human being?*



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oHLcf6BUrEY>

Voices from Bethlehem: The Little Drummer Boy



Palestinian Christians have been disappearing from the Holy Land for decades, even though this region is where Christianity began. What is going on? Dena Takturri goes to Bethlehem to ask the Palestinian Christians who remain. More voices from Bethlehem are presented in this 12-minute video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pa6igKc1M9s>

This is a great resource for adult ed. in parishes!

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The Rev. Canon Dr. Richard Toll, 2022 Cotton Fite Awardee, was honored on Dec. 4 at a reception held at Grace Memorial Episcopal Church, Portland, Oregon.

Mary Morris (3rd from left), long-time PIN activist, served as Master of Ceremonies, presenting Dick's award as a roomful of supporters cheered. On behalf of the PIN Steering Committee, the Rev. Canon Brian Grieves offered remarks and memories of the long years that he and Dick worked together on behalf of Palestinian human rights.

Scroll through an album of Reception photos [HERE](#).

Fr. Toll was guest preacher & presider at Grace Memorial on Sunday, Dec. 5. [HERE](#) is a link to his sermon for the Second Sunday of Advent, in which he talks about his long career in the Episcopal Church and his ministry with the Episcopal Peace Fellowship and the Palestine Israel Network.



Confronting Israel's Apartheid

A webinar on Thursday, January 12, 2023, at 7:00 pm CST
(8 pm EST, 6 pm MST, 5 pm PST)

To register type this link into your browser:

<https://tinyurl.com/ConfrontingIsraelsApartheid>

Sponsored by the Episcopal Diocese of Chicago's Peace and Justice Committee
and Episcopal Peace Fellowship-Palestine Israel Network.

In November 2021, the Episcopal Diocese of Chicago approved *Confronting Apartheid*,
a resolution recognizing that Israel's treatment of Palestinians constitutes apartheid as defined in
international law. How do people of faith and conscience take a moral stand on this issue?

Participants:

Richard Falk – Professor Emeritus of International Law, Princeton University, and former UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian Territories occupied since 1967 – will explain how Israel's apartheid corresponds to the definition in international conventions.

Brant Rosen – founder and Rabbi of the synagogue Tzedek Chicago, and co-founder of the Jewish Voice for Peace Rabbinical Council – will discuss how Judaism inspires Jews to oppose apartheid.

Mai Kakish Khader – Director of TEE Arabic Language & Culture for Children of the Arab Diaspora, board member of Seraj Library Project, founder and writer with Almondandfig.com – will describe how apartheid affects the daily life of her family in Palestine.

Harry Gunkel – member of the Steering Committee of Episcopal Peace Fellowship-Palestine Israel Network – will moderate.

Book Reviews by PIN Leaders

The Rev. Cliff Cutler reviews *Glory to God in the Lowest: Journeys to an Unholy Land* by Don Wagner:

Glory to God in the Lowest: Journeys to to an Unholy Land (Northampton, MA: Olive Branch Press, 2022) is the story of Don Wagner's encounter with Palestine, the injustice that enflames his passion and the prayer and meditation that still his anger. "Jesus," he says, "was highly intentional about maintaining a disciplined practice of solitude that included time for silence, prayer, meditation, and reflection."

As Wagner began a new ministry as an associate at First Presbyterian Church in Evanston, IL, a parishioner encouraged him to hold a course including Palestinian speakers to respond to the upheaval of the 1973 Yom Kippur War. OPEC (Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries) had boycotted the U.S. for its support of Israel during this war by withholding deliveries of oil. My wife and I got married during this boycott leaving a childhood friend and his wife stranded out of gas in Connecticut. Only in 2014 with Noam Chomsky's book *The Fateful Triangle* did I discover the war erupted after Anwar Sadat's diplomatic peace initiatives were rebuffed multiple times. The Evanston course, Wagner said, "was the first time I heard a clear, passionate, and compelling Palestinian narrative about the events of 1948" (Arab-Israeli War and the Nakba).

Wagner describes his early evangelical background, "highly personal and focused on my individual salvation through Jesus Christ." It was the

civil rights movement and black power that took him from the evangelical to the mainline church. He is critical of each community in its different endorsements of Christian zionism.

He was repulsed by the dangerous theology of the evangelical Christian zionist organization International Christian Embassy Jerusalem that leaves no place for Palestinians “aside from being ‘in the way’ while zionists stole their land.” I always wondered who was the clever hand behind the domain name www.christianzionism.org, an *anti-Christian zionism* website, that seekers of Christian zionism might stumble upon. It was Wagner!

His book’s penultimate chapter is an expansive explanation of Christian zionism, including a variety “hiding in plain sight.” This is Christian zionism in the mainline church that I have experienced in my own Episcopal Church. This zionism “views modern Israel as the answer to the Nazi Holocaust and antisemitism, thus guaranteeing the Jewish people an independent Jewish state in historic Palestine with unconditional political, moral, and religious support.” The sad and ironic upshot of Christian zionism is the decimation of the Palestinian Christian community. “When “Israel’s occupation began in 1967 (Palestinian Christians) were 13 percent of the population in the West Bank and today their numbers have dropped to under 1 percent.”

“Israel’s systematic efforts to displace and replace the Palestinian majority,” Wagner observes, “had echoes to what the United States did to its indigenous First Nations population.” David Truer (Ojibwe) in his book *The Heartbeat of Wounded Knee* confirms: “After that rout (the Battle of Little Big Horn), the U.S. government switched tactics. Instead of confronting the Indians head-on, it encouraged widespread encroachment by settlers (one sees the same tactics in play in the rest Bank today).”

Steve France, a retired journalist & lawyer, reviews Suad Amiry's new book, *Mother of Strangers*:

Read it [HERE](#) in *Mondoweiss*. France describes Amiry's short novel as “an important book that shares the trauma, grief, and resilience of the Palestinian people, showing why so many embrace the Palestinian cause.”



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