

A Joint Statement on Violence in Israel and Gaza

We watch with grief and horror as the violence in Israel and Gaza intensifies, following the dreadful terrorist attack on Israel by Hamas. We remember that all people are created in the image of God, and therefore deserve to be treated with respect and dignity, to live lives free of fear and violence.

As the archbishops said in their joint statement last week:

“We are grieved and deeply concerned at the violence in Israel and Gaza, and we unequivocally condemn the attacks by Hamas. We pray for those who are mourning, those who are injured, and all those fearing for their safety. We pray for restraint on all sides, and renewed efforts towards a just peace for all. The way forward must be for both sides to build confidence in a secure future through which Israel and its people can live in security within its internationally recognised borders, and Palestinians have their own state and live in their lands in security, and with peace and justice.”

We condemn the acts of violence, particularly those that are targeting innocent civilians – men, women and children who are killed and held hostage while simply trying to live. We ask that leaders seek a way forward that ends the vicious cycles of violence and finds a way to build peace among peoples and nations, in which everyone can flourish and prosper.

We pray that the peace of God will reign; that justice and mercy will bring an end to war and terror. We pray for the freedom of all peoples, that they may live in unity with their neighbours, that their humanity may be respected and that they may live without fear.

We pray too for an end to violence in this country, particularly for an end to antisemitic violence; our Jewish brothers and sisters deserve to live lives free from fear. No school should have to close because of security threats; places of worship should not need security guards to keep worshippers safe. We stand in solidarity with those in our communities who may not feel welcomed and respected. Prejudice has no place in our society, whether anti-Jewish or anti-Muslim, and the war between Hamas and Israel must not be used to demonise whole communities and destabilise the peace that we so value in our cities and towns.

Finally, we send this email today inviting the parishes of the Diocese of York to do all that they can at such short notice to support the call from Archbishop Hosam, the Anglican Archbishop in Jerusalem, that Tuesday, 17 October be a day of Fasting and Prayer for peace, reconciliation and an end to war. We encourage you and your worshipping community to join in as far as possible (you can read the letter in full here via the Anglican Communion News Service: [Anglican Archbishop in Jerusalem calls for global prayer following eruption of violence](#)).

In the words of Archbishop Hosam, with people around the world, we pray:

**O God of all justice and peace
we cry out to you in the midst of the pain and trauma
of violence and fear which prevails in the Holy Land.
Be with those who need you in these days of suffering;
we pray for people of all faiths – Jews, Muslims and Christians and for all
people of the land.
While we pray to you, O Lord, for an end to violence and the
establishment of peace,
we also call for you to bring justice and equity to the peoples.
Guide us into your kingdom
where all people are treated with dignity and honour as your children
for, to all of us, you are our Heavenly Father.
In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.**

- If you are able, please support the Jerusalem and the Middle East Church Association (JMECA) appeal for the Ahli Arab Hospital to continue providing life-saving medical care:
www.jmeca.org.uk/get-involved/donate/current-appeals-0/al-ahli-hospital-gaza-appeal

With every blessing -

**+ Stephen, Archbishop of York
+ Paul, Bishop of Whitby
+ John, Bishop of Selby
+ Eleanor, Bishop of Hull**