Much is said about Palestine-Israel, especially in Washington, DC. There is no shortage of reporting, analysis, opinion or personal commitments to “peace,” evidenced by the current push to reinvigorate the “peace process.”

But there is also much that is not said. For example, many reports of Israel’s attack on an aid flotilla headed to Gaza earlier this year failed to ask: why are basic relief supplies needed? No reference to Israel’s military and economic blockade of Gaza. No reference to the fact that the 1.5 million Palestinians in Gaza—the majority of whom are refugees—live in essentially the world’s largest open-air prison, with 70 percent living in poverty and dependent on food aid.

It can be argued that our efforts at advocacy should be aimed at identifying what British journalist Robert Fisk calls the “reluctance to confront unpleasant truths,” which too often informs our commitments to “peace.”

Such is the call of the Kairos Palestine document, written by more than a dozen Palestinian church leaders last year. In addition to challenging theologies that legitimize violence and dispossession, it points out the mission of the Church “to speak the Word of God courageously, honestly and lovingly,” and to “stand alongside the oppressed.”

It urges Christians to “take a position of truth with regard to Israel’s occupation of Palestinian land.” It favorably notes that many organizations and churches support boycotts and divestment as a form of nonviolent resistance to the occupation.

However one chooses to confront unpleasant truths, we as Christian advocates must concern ourselves with the well-being of all who inhabit Palestine-Israel.

We must begin with the confession that we are called to practice a politics of jubilee, with liberty for the oppressed and a secure existence in the land (Luke 4; Lev. 25), and to work for the day when each will sit under vine and fig tree without fear (Micah 4:4).

Palestinian Christian leaders echo this by describing a “common vision, built on equality and sharing, not on superiority, negation of the other or aggression, using the pretext of fear and security.”

For over 60 years, MCC has walked alongside Palestinians and Israelis with an understanding of peacebuilding as shared work for justice.

We have heeded calls that challenge us to work for justice here in the United States, work that requires our attention to unpleasant truths about what our roles have been in this conflict. A work that requires hope, courage, and risk.

May the witness of our Palestinian and Israeli sisters and brothers move us to confront unpleasant truths.
And a little child shall lead them

by Rachelle Lyndaker Schlabach

A large print of the photo above hangs on my office wall. It shows two Palestinian children waiting for Israeli soldiers to open a security gate so they can join their father in their family’s fields.

A few weeks ago my 8-year-old daughter came into my office and saw the photo. “Take that down,” she immediately commanded. “Put up one of bunny rabbits instead,” she continued, referring to her favorite image of safety and vulnerability.

Children everywhere are incredible barometers of justice. They can pick out unfairness in a heartbeat. Perhaps that is why Jesus welcomed children and instructed adults to be more like them (Luke 18:15–17).

More than 60 years into the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians, the well-being of children is one way to gauge its impact. The next generation can also point us to a way forward. But first a quick look at the situation into which Israelis and Palestinians are born.

“A land without a people”?

On May 15, 1948, Zionist leaders officially declared the creation of the state of Israel in Mandate Palestine. Many Jews welcomed this “safe haven” after centuries of persecution, with Christians all too often the perpetrators.

President Truman immediately supported the state of Israel, despite disagreements within his administration. Thus began what U.S. policymakers still refer to as the “special relationship” with Israel. The move was welcomed by some Christians convinced that the modern state of Israel was fulfilling biblical prophecy.

But Palestine was not exactly the “land without a people, for a people without a land” that some claimed. More than 750,000 Palestinians were displaced by the creation of the state of Israel. Many took refuge in neighboring countries, while others moved to what they thought were temporary refugee camps in the West Bank and Gaza. In 1949 Mennonite Central Committee began its work in Palestine by sending material aid to refugees.

The West Bank and Gaza Today

Since 1967 Israel has occupied the West Bank and Gaza, along with the “annexed” territories of East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights. There are now more than 280,000 Israeli settlers living throughout the West Bank, connected by a series of limited-access roads.

Meanwhile, checkpoints and roadblocks make it difficult, if not impossible, for Palestinians to travel freely. Palestinian Christian clergy seeking to visit holy sites in Jerusalem are frequently denied access.

Even more dramatic is Israel’s “security wall,” which winds its way through West Bank land, rather than following the 1967 “green line” border. (See map on p. 3, created by MCC partner organization The Applied Research Institute–Jerusalem).

Israel withdrew its troops and settlers from Gaza in 2005. But Israel continues to control all air, land and sea access. The 140 square mile strip of land is home to 1.5 million people.

Recently Israel relaxed its siege on Gaza due to international pressure. But the amount of goods allowed into Gaza...
is still less than before the siege began. The restrictions make developing any kind of import/export economy nearly impossible.

Furthermore, Israel has stated it will continue to deny Gazans permission to exit the Gaza Strip other than for medical emergencies. Communication between the West Bank and Gaza has become increasingly difficult.

What does this mean for Palestinian children living in the West Bank and Gaza? Nearly one third of all Palestinians live in poverty. More than half of the young children in Gaza and more than a third of those in the West Bank suffer from anemia. In some parts of the Gaza Strip, one of out every three children is malnourished.

And as they get older, their options for schooling and careers become more limited each day. As one young woman in Gaza studying English told me earlier this year, “my dream is to visit Jerusalem.” But the city from which I had just come, less than 50 miles away, is off limits to her.

Remembering the Past

Safia Hasan Shubaita, a woman in her 80s, gives tours of her hometown, the village of Miska in the state of Israel. She shows them the mosque, walks through the streets and past the more than 100 houses that lie in the village.

The tour would seem ordinary, were it not for the fact that the village no longer exists. Rather than streets and houses, all that is left are fruit orchards and the ruins of the mosque.

Shubaita works with an Israeli MCC partner called Zochrot, a Hebrew word for “remembering,” which seeks to inform Israelis about the Nakba. Nakba, Arabic for “catastrophe,” refers to the destruction and displacement that took place in Palestinian communities in 1948.

Were it not for her work with Zochrot, Shubaita would be barred from returning to her village, even to maintain the cemetery. Zochrot’s work includes tours of Palestinian sites, as well as putting up signs marking the geography of the forgotten villages.

Through this work, Zochrot hopes that Israelis will be able to acknowledge and reconcile their past and to provide equal rights for all peoples in the region.

The Winter 2010 issue of a Common Place magazine featured Zochrot and can be found at acommonplace.mcc.org. More information can also be found on Zochrot’s website at zochrot.org.

Israel Today

Most Israelis live largely separated from the realities facing their Palestinian neighbors. (See stories in this Memo of Israelis trying to change this.)

Many Jews in Israel have immigrated from other countries, drawn to the idea of a Jewish homeland. Israel’s “law of return” grants any Jew the right to immigrate and settle in Israel, along with automatic Israeli citizenship.

Many Israelis enjoy a high standard of living, with one of the highest life expectancies in the world, a well-developed infrastructure, and many excellent schools and hospitals. Yet according to the Jewish Institute for Israel Studies, nearly half of the Jewish children in Israel live in poverty. Nearly 75 percent of Arab Israeli children do as well.

(continued on page 6)
The Israel-Palestine conflict continues to confound the best minds and confuse the best intentions. The purpose of this service is to offer prayers of understanding and prayers for peace, and to place, once more, this long and painful history into the hands of God, the source of peace.

Passions are strong on all sides of the Israel-Palestine story. The service intends to provide a place of quiet reflection rather than impassioned debate, of self-examination rather than finger pointing, and of taking an action on the side of hope for the future, by investing in the planting of olive trees where olive trees have been destroyed.

They who plant trees are servants of God, they provide a kindness for many generations, and faces they have not seen will bless them.

—Henry Van Dyke, Presbyterian pastor and Princeton Professor of English Literature, 1852–1933, alt.

Opening prayer

We gladly confess: “The eyes of all look to you, and you give them food in due season. You open your hand, satisfying the desire of every living thing.”

That we gladly and confidently confess—And yet, we notice your creatures not well fed but mired in hunger, poverty, and despair.

And yet, we notice the power of evil that stalks the best of us:

- the power of cancer,
- the dread of war,
- sadness of death—“good death” or cruel death.

And so we pray confidently toward you, but with footnotes that qualify.

We pray confidently, but we will not deny in your presence the negatives that make us wonder.

We pray amid our honest reservations, give us patience to wait, impatience to care, sadness held honestly, surrounded by joy over your coming kingdom—and peace while we wait—and peace at the last, that we may be peacemakers and so your children.

We pray in the name of your firstborn Son, our peacemaker.

—“On Theodicy,” from Prayers for a Privileged People by Walter Brueggemann. Abingdon Press, 2008. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Abbreviations

HWB  Hymnal: A Worship Book
STJ  Sing the Journey
STS  Sing the Story
Song suggestions

There are many choices for singing about God’s care and inclusivity; they should be a prominent part of the service. Songs from the Middle East include:

HWB 427, You shall go out with joy
STS 69, Ya hamalaLah (O Lamb of God)
The Vine and Fig Tree by Mary Miché. Available online.

Scripture readings with commentary

Psalm 85:10-13 (“steadfast love and faithfulness will meet . . .”)
Luke 10:30-37 (the Good Samaritan)
Colossians 3:11 (“no longer Jew nor Greek . . .”)

Stories from Israel-Palestine

If there is someone in your congregation who has firsthand experience in Israel-Palestine, invite him or her to tell stories of those who live there. Or if Israelis or Palestinians live in your area, invite them to tell their stories. The World Council of Churches has also prepared worship materials containing several stories, available online as “It’s Time for Peace.” After the telling of each story, allow silence or sing a refrain.

Praying together

Begin with the Lord’s Prayer. Then, choose one of the following: 1) Edit the prayer in STJ 144 to reflect thoughts and experiences of today’s service, and sing the first stanza of STJ 47 in response. 2) Use the bold-faced response in STS 135 to prayers that are spoken by members of the congregation like the Leader’s prayer, but with specific reference to Israel-Palestine. 3) Keep an accompaniment (or humming) going between sung refrains of STJ 98 and have members of the congregation offer prayers. End any of the three options with the Prayer of St. Francis, HWB 733.

Offering

Since 2001 The Olive Tree Campaign has planted more than 50,000 olive trees in the West Bank and Gaza where trees have been destroyed in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The offering on this occasion could be dedicated to The Olive Tree Campaign (online at jw-pal.org/content.php?page=1), or see the back page for an opportunity to give to MCC’s work in Israel-Palestine.

The olive has a long and rich history, many practical uses, and significance as a symbol. A quick review would be an appropriate introduction. There are many biblical images of the olive, including Genesis 8:11, in which the dove returns to the ark bearing an olive branch, and Hosea 14:6, “His shoots shall spread out; his beauty shall be like the olive tree.”

Prior to the gathering of the offering, this Talmudic story might be read:

An old man was planting a tree. A young person passed by and asked, what are you planting? An olive tree, the old man replied. Silly fool, said the youth. Don’t you know that it takes many years for an olive tree to bear fruit? That’s okay, said the old man. Just as others planted for me, I plant for future generations.

A prayer of dedication and song of thanksgiving ends the offering.

Sending


So instead of loving what you think is peace, love other [people] and love God above all. And instead of hating the people you think are warmakers, hate the appetites and the disorder in your own soul, which are the causes of war. If you love peace, then hate injustice, hate tyranny, hate greed—but hate these things in yourself, not in another.

—Thomas Merton, from *New Seeds of Contemplation*

Beloved, be steadfast, immovable, always excelling in the work of the Lord, because you know that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.

—1 Corinthians 15:58

Clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. Amen.

—Colossians 3:14, 17

Ken Nafziger is professor of music at Eastern Mennonite University.
The U.S. Role

The United States has long been seen as a critical mediator needed to move talks forward between Israelis and Palestinians. Early in President Barack Obama’s term, he appointed former Senator George Mitchell as his Middle East envoy. Mitchell and other top officials have visited the region numerous times to try to move a peace process forward.

But they have met with limited success. During Vice President Biden’s visit in March, Israel announced plans to proceed with 1,600 new housing units in East Jerusalem. Israel’s tenuous settlement freeze is set to expire in September. Palestinian homes continue to be demolished. These Israeli actions, carried out in violation of earlier agreements, make it difficult for Palestinians to trust that the negotiations will be fair.

Meanwhile the Israeli government continues to lift up security concerns as paramount. They cite the rocket attacks from Gaza into southern Israel and say they are only doing what is necessary to protect their citizens.

Israel continues to enjoy strong backing from the U.S. Congress. Even during this time of budget cuts, the $3 billion in military aid pledged to Israel was never in doubt. In fact, the amount of aid increased this summer when the Obama administration announced an additional $205 million for an anti-missile system.

A steady stream of resolutions in support of Israel are introduced in Congress, frequently passing with overwhelming support. One current resolution (H. Res. 1553), with 47 sponsors in the House, gives a green light for Israel to attack Iran, an action that would certainly draw the United States into yet another war in the Middle East.

A Way Forward

There are, however, a few more dissenting voices on the Hill than in years past. Several members of Congress traveled to Gaza in the last year. Others have ventured beyond the typical “congressional delegation” itinerary of Jerusalem, Tel Aviv and Sderot to meet with Palestinian leaders in the West Bank.

Jewish groups such as J Street and Americans for Peace Now seek to build constituencies that are “pro-Israel and pro-peace.” Speaking after he returned from Gaza earlier this year, Rep. Keith Ellison (D-Minn.) noted that it is much easier on Capitol Hill to be only pro-Israel or even only pro-Palestinian than it is to be both.

And yet our call as Christians must be exactly that: to work for a just and secure peace for all of the future generations of the Middle East. This must include an end to the occupation, respect for human rights (including those of refugees) and a shared Jerusalem.

All Things Are Possible

When I was in Gaza earlier this year with an MCC delegation, we visited a metalworking class sponsored by the Near East Council of Churches. Teenage boys were learning the skill of welding and metalwork. And yet because of the siege, few jobs await them after graduation.

Needing work, will they begin to create rockets for Hamas? Or will they be able to use their skills to create tools for everyday life? Only time will tell. But these are the choices that face policymakers.

The story about Jesus welcoming the little children is followed in each of the synoptic gospels by Jesus’ command to the rich young ruler to sell all that he has. When the disciples protest this teaching, Jesus says that for mortals it is impossible but “for God all things are possible.”

Is it possible for a true and lasting peace to come to the Middle East? Many Palestinians and Israelis are already working to create a new reality, one which is safe and secure for all children.

Let us work so that the images of soldiers threatening children can come down and be replaced with lions and lambs and yes, even bunny rabbits. With God all things are possible.
By Jeff Halper

[On August 10], the day before the Muslim holy month of Ramadan began, at 2:30 in the morning, workers sent by the Israeli authorities destroyed the tombstones in the last portion of the Mamilla cemetery, an historic Muslim burial ground [in Jerusalem]. Some 1,500 Muslim graves have been cleared in several nighttime operations to make way for a $100 million Museum of Tolerance and Human Dignity.

The month-long period between [Israeli Prime Minister] Netanyahu’s July 6 visit to Washington and the start of Ramadan has provided Israel with a window to “clear the table” after a frustrating hiatus on home demolitions imposed by the mildly critical Obama Administration.

According to the UN’s Office of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA): “[July 14–20, the week of Netanyahu’s return from Washington] there was a significant increase in the number of demolitions in Area C, with at least 86 structures demolished in the Jordan Valley and the southern West Bank, including Bethlehem and Hebron districts.”

Two-thirds of the demolitions for 2010 have occurred since Netanyahu’s meeting with [President] Obama. More than 3,000 demolition orders are outstanding in the West Bank, and up to 15,000 in Palestinian East Jerusalem.

The demolition of homes is, of course, only a small, if painful, part of the destruction. The much-trumpeted “settlement freeze” amounted to no less than a temporary lull in construction. According to Peace Now’s Settlement Watch, at least 600 housing units have started to be built during the freeze, in over 60 different settlements. According to Ha’aretz, some 2,700 housing units are waiting to be constructed.

The fact that the so-called settlement freeze did not really end settlement construction is obvious. The American government seems ready to accept lip-service from Israel, as against overt threats towards the Palestinians if they do not acquiesce. Palestinian negotiators revealed [in August] the Obama Administration threatened to cut all ties with the Palestinian Authority, political and financial, if they continued to insist on a genuine freeze on settlements or even clear parameters on what the sides will negotiate.

Just as destructive of any real peace process, however, is the fact that the focus on settlement freeze deflects attention from attempts by Israel to create “irreversible facts on the ground” which will defeat the very process of negotiation.

In the weeks and days leading up to Ramadan [this reality was] papered over with fine words. Netanyahu issued a statement saying: “We mark this important month amid attempts to achieve direct peace talks with the Palestinians and to advance peace treaties with our Arab neighbors. I know you are partners in this goal and I ask for your support both in prayers and in any other joint effort to really create a peaceful and harmonious coexistence.”

Obama and [Secretary of State] Clinton also sent their greetings to the Muslim world, Obama observing that Ramadan “reminds us of the principles that we hold in common, and Islam’s role in advancing justice, progress, tolerance, and the dignity of all human beings.” Both the White House and the State Department will hold Iftar meals. But the bulldozers tell a much different story.

Excerpted with permission from an article entitled “Ramadan Kareem from the Netanyahu and Obama Administrations.” Jeff Halper is an Israeli who serves as Director of the Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions (ICAHD). Learn more at icahd.org.
In 1967, I was five years old. My parents, my five sisters and my two brothers and I lived in Jenin. We had to flee to Amman. My mother carried my little brother in her arms; my sisters were at her sides.

I saw an Israeli plane approaching. It returned in less than one minute and sent a bomb. There were bodies everywhere. I looked at my mother and my little brother, whose face was cut into two. My sister Salwa’s leg was cut in two; she had also lost some of her fingers. Many metal splinters penetrated her body in different places. Metal splinters also penetrated my leg. My sister Asma was killed.

Since then, not a day, not a moment passed, that I thought I would ever speak to an Israeli. There was in me only blood, pain, and violence.

[Later in life], I was surprised to discover that there were meetings between [Israelis and Palestinians]. A man told of the death of his son in the explosion of a bus. The fact of seeing an Israeli feeling pain and loss led me to speak with him, to tell him what had happened to my family.

[Israeli and Palestinian families] all spoke about pain, and of what we had not gained with violence. That influenced me a great deal. I saw that there was a human aspect, which I was to discover more of. As of this moment, I felt that I had a mission, a national duty. The Israeli community must be able to see in me somebody who holds tightly onto the hand of peace.

Jalal Khudiari is a Palestinian from Jenin.

I came to Israel from South Africa in 1967. On March 3, 2002, my son David was killed by a [Palestinian] sniper, along with nine other people. It is impossible to describe what it is to lose a child. Your whole life is totally changed forever. It’s not that I’m not the same person I was. I’m the same person with a lot of pain. Wherever I go, I carry this with me.

The more time went by the more I wanted to work somewhere to make a difference. These past years have been an incredible experience for me. I’ve learned such a lot for my own personal growth, apart from the work I’m doing, which is almost the reason I get up in the morning, actually.

It was the beginning of understanding how not to be patronizing; that’s a really easy trap to fall into in this kind of work—“I know what’s best for the Palestinians, let me tell them what to do.” It took me time to understand, to look at the differences in temperament, in culture.

It’s something I feel almost duty-bound to be doing; it’s not a favor that I’m doing for anyone else but a personal mission almost. I know this works. I believe removing the stigma from each side and getting to know the person on the other side allows for a removal of fear, and a way to understand that a long-term reconciliation process is possible.

Robi Damelin is an Israeli who lives in Tel Aviv.

For many years MCC has been a close friend of The Parents Circle—Families Forum, which encourages dialogue between Israelis and Palestinians who have lost loved ones in the conflict.

Excerpted here are stories from two members of the forum. Read more stories at theparents circle.org.
Website Resource Highlights

The MCC Washington Office website provides information about the office, action alerts, upcoming events, and resources on domestic and international issues. Recent highlights include:

Health Care Fact Sheets Following the passage of health care reform, the MCC Washington Office has created several fact sheets to help you understand its implications. Current fact sheets include Young Adults, Individual Mandate and Subsidies, and Immigrants. These resources can be found at washington.mcc.org/life/health.

Trade Justice The movement for trade justice calls for trade policies that work for the common good rather than the interests of a few. Trade should work to promote life and dignity for all people. This new webpage has resources and further reading about trade justice, and will be updated as developments occur. It can be found at washington.mcc.org/issues/globalecon/trade.

Debt Relief Many of the world’s poorest countries continue to suffer from unjust and illegitimate debt owed to foreign governments or international financial institutions. This page contains resources, policy solutions, and faith reflections regarding debt relief for poor nations and can be found at washington.mcc.org/issues/globalecon/debt.

Faith and Politics Christian political advocacy is a form of public witness and a tangible way of loving our neighbor. This new page has resources, information, and faith reflections for those interested in affecting public policy following Anabaptist principles. It can be found at washington.mcc.org/resources/faith-and-politics.
**SAMPLE LETTER ON ISRAEL-PALESTINE**

Dear Member of Congress,

I am writing to ask that you strongly support efforts to bring about a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in Israel-Palestine.

All parties should be held accountable to their previous commitments and to international law.

Palestinian leaders can ensure that progress continues to be made in the areas of capacity-building and security.

Israel should extend and expand its settlement freeze and immediately cease the demolition of Palestinian homes, which undercuts the prospect of peace negotiations. Israeli leaders should also grant freedom of movement for the people of Gaza, and allow full resumption of exports from the Gaza Strip.

A just, secure and peaceful future is clearly in the best interests of Israelis, Palestinians and the United States and I urge you to work toward this goal.

Sincerely,

[Name and address]

This letter is also available online at washingtonmemo.org/newsletter/fall10.

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**STORIES OF CONGREGATIONAL ADVOCACY**

**Advocating for the DREAM Act**

Eastern Mennonite University (EMU) graduate Isabel Castillo traveled to Washington, DC in July to urge passage of the Development, Relief and Education of Alien Minors (DREAM) Act, which offers legal status to undocumented persons who were brought to the United States as children.

Isabel migrated to the United States when she was six years old along with her family. In 2007 she graduated magna cum laude from EMU with a degree in social work. The DREAM Act would grant legal status to others like Isabel who lack documentation to work in the United States.

“Two of Senator Reid’s staff cried when we told them our stories. We don’t want tears or sympathy anymore, we want action,” said Isabel to a Harrisonburg, Va. newspaper. For more information visit emu.edu/news/isabel-castillo. Resources on the DREAM Act are available at washington.mcc.org/issues/immigration/resources.

**God’s Love Has No Borders**

In response to the growing national and local conversation about immigration, First Mennonite Church (Lincoln, Neb.) has created banners bearing the message, “God’s Love Has No Borders: Immigration Reform Must Be Just” (based on buttons developed by the Peace and Justice Support Network of Mennonite Church USA).

First Mennonite is beginning a six-month immigration emphasis organized by the congregation’s Economic Justice Team. “Our hope is that it will remind people of their own immigrant heritage and of the Bible’s teachings which are often forgotten as this issue is debated,” said Pastor David Orr.

Banners are available in both English and Spanish. Purchase a banner from fmclincoln.org/immigrationbanner.
Virginia Mennonites Visit Capitol Hill

Four Mennonites from the Shenandoah Valley traveled to Washington, DC on August 23 to share with their legislators their learnings from a trip to Israel-Palestine in May. Staff from the MCC Washington Office set up the meetings and accompanied them on their visits.

STAFF UPDATES

In August Theo Sitther traveled to Haiti as part of an MCC advocacy delegation. The delegation visited with partners and communities that were affected by the January 12 earthquake. Theo is available to speak about Haiti. To request a speaker from the MCC Washington Office please contact us at mccwash@mcc.org.

This past summer we enjoyed the contributions of three interns: Grace Hercyk (Harrisonburg, Va.), Mark Massey (Columbus, Ohio) and Janelle Tupper (Cheverly, Md.).

UPCOMING EVENTS

Stand Up and Take Action Against Debt and Global Poverty

On September 17–19, Jubilee USA Network invites congregations around the United States to pray and take action for global economic justice. President Obama and other world leaders will be meeting September 20–22 at a United Nations summit to assess progress on the Millennium Development Goals. Find out more at jubileeusa.org

High School Essay Contest

The MCC Washington Office invites submissions for our 12th annual high school essay contest. This year’s grand prize is $500 with three regional winners each receiving $100. Students can choose to write on immigration, Palestine-Israel, or U.S. military spending. All essays must be submitted by December 17. More information is available at washington.mcc.org.

Upcoming Seminars

MCC Washington and MCC East Coast are sponsoring a workshop in Harrisonburg, Va. before School for Leadership Training (SLT) at Eastern Mennonite Seminary. The workshop, on Monday, January 17, is called “To See Like You See: Talking about Difficult Political Issues in Congregations,” and is open to anyone attending SLT as well as others.

Prior to Pastors’ Week at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind. the MCC Washington Office will help lead a Leadership Clinic. “Wise as Serpents, Innocent as Doves: Navigating Social Policy Issues in Our Churches,” will take place on Monday, January 24. Information about both events is at washington.mcc.org/advocate/seminars.

Peace Sunday 2010

Mennonite Church USA, along with Mennonite World Conference, invites congregations to celebrate Peace Sunday on September 19, or another Sunday of their choosing. Fear Not: For I Am With You is this year’s theme. Visit mennoniteusa.org/peace for worship materials and other resources.
As conflict continues to impact people's access to goods and food in Gaza and the West Bank, coping strategies are stretched nearly to exhaustion. MCC is working with partners in north Gaza to provide more food to families through livestock. By supplying equipment, training and animals, the project will help provide a sustainable food source.

$100 is the cost of five rabbits or six chickens.

$160 provides equipment, such as fencing, for one family raising animals.

donate.mcc.org